

TRACTS

OF

THE ANGLICAN FATHERS.

DISCIPLINE.

VOL III.

LONDON:

WILLIAM EDWARD PAINTER, 342, STRAND.

1842.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

PART XII.—PREFACE.

	PAGE
On Submission to the Church (Ferne)	11
Of the Canon of Scripture, and its Sufficiency (Field). . .	44

PART XIII.—PREFACE.

The Notes of the Church (Field).	73
The Government of the Church during the Apostolical Era (Potter)	98

PART XIV.—PREFACE.

The Era of the Church immediately after the Apostles (Parker)	138
The Exclusive Right of Bishops to Ordain (Hughes) . .	158
The Right of the Church to Excommunicate (Hughes) .	172

PART XV.—PREFACE.

The Office of a Minister (Lucy)	201
Lay Eldership proved to be Contrary to Scripture and Anti- quity (Hall)	212
Lay Baptism (Waterland)	229
Baptism by Women (Hooker)	234
On Sponsors and Confirmation (Nichols)	249

PART XVI.—PREFACE.

Salvation only in the Visible Church (Dodwell)	265
The Unity of Religious Assemblies (Sherlock)	282
The Circumstances of Worship (Saywell)	288
The Unreasonableness of Separation (Stillingfleet) . . .	293
Penance (Fuller)	301
Visitation and Burial Services (Falkner)	311

PART XVII.—PREFACE.

The Regale and Pontificale (Beveridge)	329
The Duty of the State with Reference to the Church (South)	335
The Divine Institution of the Civil Magistracy (Blackall) .	349
Lay and Private Patronage (Mills)	359

INTRODUCTION.

THE attention which has lately been paid to *Church Discipline* is one of the most encouraging signs of the times, as regards our religious prosperity. Its origin may be briefly traced as follows:—The Reformers of the Anglican communion proceeded, as has been well observed, on a refined and catholic principle of eclecticism, not taking what seemed best to their own private judgment, and most expedient for the circumstances of the times, but what was most in accordance with the teaching and usages of the primitive Church. This principle they exhibited in all the authorized and corporate acts of that branch of the Church Catholic over which they were called to preside. But the great work of the Reformation required and found instruments of all kinds. The poor labourer was to be awakened from the delusive lethargy in which the combined doctrines of purgatory and *Roman* absolution had plunged him; the mendicant friar and the itinerant preacher were to be combated with popular weapons; the learned Papist was to be met with the volumes of the Fathers and the early records of the Church; and the bold but untrue statements of Papal champions were to be refuted by an appeal to the facts of history. But the frailty of human nature will rarely allow the man successful in one department to abstain from meddling with others with which he is less acquainted: the qualifications which carried him triumphantly through one dispute, or one course of exhortation, will, he hopes, stand him in stead in another; and the motto “*Non omnia possumus omnes*” is practically forgotten. Hence we find that among those whose names we reverence for their faith and zeal, are many whose writings are little in unison with the accredited doctrines and discipline of our Church. Holding to the one true and great foundation, they not only built, in some instances, an incorrect superstructure thereon; but, venturing on subjects *unconnected* with doctrine, they promulgated grievous errors: the consequence is, that there is scarcely a sect (save those enthusiastic ones which find favour chiefly, if not wholly, with the vulgar, and save also the various grades

of Unitarians) who cannot find ancestors in heterodoxy among the promoters of the English Reformation.

The judgment, then, of the Reformers is only so far valuable as it is the judgment of the Anglican Church, and expressed in her authoritative declarations. Now if it was the case in matters of doctrine, which all allowed to be important, much more was it likely to be so with regard to discipline, on which there were three opinions—one, that forms of Church government were matters of very secondary importance; another, that the greater difference from those of Rome, the better; and lastly, that the primitive Church was the only lawful model. All, however, held to what was and is called the apostolical succession—the one party, however, maintaining that an episcopal succession was essential; the other, that a presbyterian succession is sufficient.

It may be worth while to enquire under what circumstances this latter opinion prevailed; for it is quite certain that in the days of Ignatius no such idea existed, and it is equally certain that it did not prevail immediately prior to the Reformation. It is evident that an episcopal succession was maintained among the Albigenses and Valdenses, or was supposed to be maintained; for the true cause of the fierce war which has been from time to time carried on among reformed divines concerning these Churches, has been the opinion, on the one side, that the succession *was* valid, and on the other, that it was *not*.

Had there been no question among *our own clergy* on this point, we should never have heard one word about the heresy of the Albigenses, or the modernness of the Valdenses; but the truth was, that each party saw, or thought they saw, that a great principle was at stake—the one imagined that if the Piedmontese religionists were allowed to be true Churches, the episcopal succession must be given up; and consequently every argument and every testimony that could be pressed into the service, principally those of Bossuet, were adduced to prove that the Albigenses were Manichæans, and the Valdenses a mere modern sect; and therefore the perpetuity of the Church must be sought in the Roman communion: the other party, believing that the corruptions, as well in doctrine as in discipline, of the Roman

Church had disfranchised and unchurched her, considered that the perpetuity of the Church could only be maintained by admitting and defending the apostolicity of the Piedmontese Churches. Hence arose the controversy.

We may be permitted to say, that, taking the principles developed into consideration, the truth appears to lie partly on each side ; for we are perfectly satisfied with the arguments adduced, by Mr. Faber and others, as to the apostolicity of the Albigenses and the Valdenses ; and, on the other hand, we believe that the Churches, both of Rome and of the Greeks, are, though awfully corrupted, branches of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church, and as such, therefore, offer to their communicants the means of salvation. We allude here to the controversy only to show that it was supposed, and we think rightly supposed, by these Christians, that they had preserved the episcopal succession : and they still do so in office, though not in name. We must, then, look to the Lutheran Reformation for the establishment of a presbyterian discipline ; and we shall find various sentiments obtaining among the continental Reformers, according as they thought it practicable or impracticable to introduce the episcopate. Calvin admitted, in the earlier part of his career, that he thought it most apostolical where it might be obtained ; but, despairing of founding National Churches, he and his brethren seem to have been careless as to episcopacy : for it is undoubtedly true, that when he proposed to Elizabeth, among other persons, a synod to establish an uniformity of discipline and worship, he and others might have obtained consecration at the hands of the Reformed Anglican bishops, who would have been but too happy to confer on their continental fellow-labourers the advantages they enjoyed, and of the importance of which they were fully sensible. The reply of Elizabeth to this notable proposition was, that “the Church of England would retain her episcopacy”—a reply, from which we learn, at least, the opinions of the Queen and her advisers, that Calvin intended to establish, or rather wished to establish, an universal presbyterianism among the Reformed Churches. There are those to whom the fable of the fox who had lost his tail would be suggested, by the appearance of this transaction ; but it would be

well to investigate the affair a little further, before coming to a decision. We have here only the implied opinion of Elizabeth and her ministers; *but the proposed conference was dropped*. Now what we may fairly infer from this last fact, is one of two things—either that Calvin and his colleagues did not desire consecration, and therefore thought the episcopal succession a non-essential thing; or, if they did desire it, they did not esteem it *very* important: for the only assignable cause why no further overtures were made from Geneva is, that the Reformers of that city thought it derogatory to their own dignity to seek a conference in which the other party had already predetermined the question at issue, and could only offer a participation in the advantages of their communion. In either case, the dictum of Geneva was, that the presbyterian succession was sufficient to constitute apostolical discipline.

From this consideration we must turn to the actual state of the Genevan polity at the time, and we shall see that Calvin would have greatly extended his own power and influence by making presbyterianism universal among the Reformed Churches. He, together with Beza and others, had made Geneva a sort of Protestant Rome; it was to be the nursing mother of all Presbyterian Churches, the model from which such Churches were to frame their discipline, and the authority from which they were to take their doctrines. It cannot be doubted that the gigantic abilities of Calvin, aided by such men as Beza and the others who concurred with him in his project, were well capable of carrying it into execution; and, moreover, it is not to be forgotten that, over this Protestant Rome, Calvin, by creating and accepting the office of perpetual president, had constituted himself the Protestant Pope. The more, therefore, his scheme of Church government extended, the greater would his own power and personal influence become; and we see this exemplified by the hold which his doctrines and personal opinions maintained in so remote a country as Scotland. On the other hand, by overthrowing the Papal supremacy, the Church of England established the principle that all bishops were equal, save as to priority; precedence might be yielded, but superiority could not be claimed: and hence, by acceding to the episcopal discipline,

Calvin, though he might take a higher order in the Church than that of presbyter, would have lost his real supremacy : those who, as it was, were subordinate to the *president*, could not have been, by the very constitutions of the Church, subordinate to their fellow bishop. We are not, it is true, justified, from these facts, in *asserting* that Calvin was only prevented by a spiritual pride of place from acquiescing in and acceding to the episcopal discipline ; but we cannot help very strongly *suspecting* that such was the case.—The character and attainments of such men as those to whom we have alluded could not fail to make a strong impression on their age ; and we find the Genevan doctrines soon silently spreading within the pale of the Anglican Church, and bringing with them, in no slight degree, ideas favourable to the Genevan discipline also. Hence we are not to be surprised if we find many of the early Reformers predestinarians and low Churchmen. Some stronger minds separated the two errors ; some were strong enough to see and reject the dangerous *luxury*, but not acute enough to detect the doctrinal metaphysical error. This latter was the case with Grindall and Whitgift ; the former with Hooper and Bradford. Moreover, the excitement of progressive change had not passed away in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign, when the final stand was made ; and it was said to the Reformers that enough had been done—to the Reformation.

“ Hitherto shalt thou go, but no farther.”

The Church had now, by the blessing of God, been purified from every Roman error ; she had preserved every element of Catholicity ; and had the movement been allowed to make further progress, the results must have been unfavourable : but it was not to be expected that, after so many years of progressive changes, the love of change, *for its own sake*, would not have arisen in many minds. Such persons identified reformation, naturally enough, with alteration ; many others really preferred the Genevan discipline, and entertained the hope that further changes would be introduced, till the framework of the Anglican Church would assume a Genevan character ; others, struck with horror at the depths of Roman corruption which had been so lately, so boldly, and so constantly laid bare before them, and mistaking re-

verse of wrong for right, looked favourably and with earnest hope on any alteration whose tendency bore an anti-Roman appearance. All these persons objected to, and resisted the stop made by the Anglican Church in the reign of Elizabeth ; and they accordingly formed the Puritan party in the Church, complying but in part with her requisitions, and preaching doctrines which they knew to be in opposition to her Articles and Liturgy. The more violent of these distinguished themselves by the Mar-prelate publications ; the more learned, by their bulky argumentative folios.

A singular and well meant, but we venture to think injudicious, line of conduct, adopted by our prelates during that reign, tended much to render thinking persons of opinion that presbyterian orders were valid, and consequently the presbyterian succession apostolical—though, in fact, it did not imply so much. This was the practice of licensing without re-ordaining such persons as, having been presbyterially ordained, were desirous of employment in the English communion. It is possible that some of the bishops thought presbyterian ordination valid, where episcopal ordination was unattainable, and that the members of foreign Reformed Churches were in this condition. We have already shown that it had been attainable, yet was not sought ; but their expressed reason for not re-ordaining such persons was, that they had been ordained “according to the laudable custom of foreign Churches.” It is to be observed that, had they re-ordained them, it would have been a great discouragement to the Reformed Churches on the continent, because it would have amounted to a denial that their orders were valid ; and this, whatever their own private opinions might be, the heads of the Anglican Church felt very unwilling to do. It would have seemed a hard thing to condemn all the foreign Protestants for the fault of Calvin, or all the preachers for the fault of those who *ought* to have been bishops. It was impossible to judge of the difficulties which each particular district presented, and accordingly our bishops accepted them as they were. We cannot help thinking that a better effect would have been produced by re-ordaining them openly : for, first, the discipline of the Church is not to be set aside from motives of delicacy ; and, secondly, as to any injury inflicted on the foreign Protestants by our not recognizing their

orders, that should have been left in the hands of God, who will protect and keep his own, even though the path of *our* duty may seem to make against them.

But when Dissenters or low Churchmen appeal, as they sometimes do, to these appointments, as a proof that, in the earlier ages of the Reformed Anglican Church, presbyterian orders were held valid, we reply that the argument falls to the ground, as it may easily be resolved into the judgment of individual bishops, and not that of the Anglican Church. Nor does it always imply a recognition of presbyterian orders as valid, even by the bishop appointing and employing the parties. We admit that Providence, and not our own wisdom, nor, in this instance, the wisdom of our ancestors, has extricated us from the difficulty. The larger number of the individuals so appointed (and be it remembered that there were but few) were employed by bishops, who considered that their ordination dated from their being presbyterially set apart on the continent: but we are prepared to show that the episcopal license *is of itself good and valid ordination*. This may seem a bold assertion, and one contrary to many canons of many councils, and one, too, equally contrary to the more apostolic practice of our Church at present. Moreover, we do not contend for its propriety or expediency; but we simply enquire, what constitutes ordination? Is it the laying on of episcopal hands, or a commission by episcopal authority? Is not this latter the essence of the whole, and is not every other part a ceremony?—solemn ones we admit, apostolical ones we grant—ceremonies which *ought* on no account to be prætermitted; but are they of the essentials of the ordinance? We contend *not*; and we think this one of those rites and ceremonies which every Apostolical Church claims a right to decree for herself. There is no express command that hands should be laid on the head of the person ordained, as it is commanded that water and a certain form of words should be used in baptism, and bread and wine in the eucharist. We allow at once, and freely, that we think the omission would be totally inexcusable, because we have so many scriptural proofs that such was the apostolic practice. We allow that it would be most irreverend, nay, most disgraceful, in these days; and it is only

because we know that the bishops to whom we refer were good men and wise men, and because no one of them has left it on record *why* he did so, that we refrain from more pointedly deploring their practice. We merely contend that the absence of the imposition of hands does not invalidate the ordination, where there *is* a transmission of ecclesiastical authority. Let us acknowledge that we take this view with reluctance, that we would gladly not entertain the question at all; but, in fact, it resolves itself into this—does the Anglican Church recognize presbyterian orders? or does she recognize ordination without imposition of hands? Both principle and inclination lead us to prefer the latter alternative; and an attentive investigation of the case satisfies us that we have rightly decided.

The episcopal character of the apostolical succession once proved, every other point contended for by the EVANGELICAL HIGH CHURCHMAN follows as a matter of course. The Church, as a spiritual corporation, has lodged in the hands of her ministers the power of admitting, expelling, and reconciling members; of administering the sacraments, and conducting the public services of the Church: these are committed exclusively to them. She expects them to superintend the business of public education—to warn, exhort, and teach, “in season and out of season.”

And here let us for a few moments speak on the nature of priestly absolution, as taught by the Anglican Church, and as taught by that of Rome. The latter merely declares that the priest has the powers conferred on the apostles in the words, “Whosoever sins ye shall remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye shall retain, they are retained;” but that these words implied the transferring to the priest of the divine power to pardon sin, or a promise to ratify his pardon, as to the *guilt of sin* in all cases, that Church has never openly asserted: but she has done what is equivalent to this, for she has declared that if a priest, at the time he pronounces the absolution, does not mean in his heart the words he speaks with his lips, the absolution is null and void, and the guilt remains with the offending party, as though no absolution had been given at all. Here it is to be remarked that the Roman Church did not

introduce a new heresy, but merely sanctioned one which had long prevailed among a corrupt and ambitious priesthood. The early Church, in these cases, spoke, not God's forgiveness, but her own; which two were no more necessarily conjoined than the forgiveness of God with the forgiveness of an offended parent. The Church received the offender back to her communion, restored him to her love, and exhorted him, *as the Anglican visitation service to the sick does*, AFTER HER ABSOLUTION, to seek the pardon of God. But the Roman priesthood misunderstood the commission given to the Church, and impiously arrogated to themselves the divine attribute of forgiving sin. This delusion the Church to which they belonged indirectly sanctioned, by the monstrous dogma which we have mentioned; for as the absolution from the Church's censure re-admits the individual to her communion, there could be no deception were *this* the forgiveness intended, inasmuch as every man would know whether he were admitted to communion, and therefore absolved, or not: whereas if the heart of the priest be the sole depository of God's mercy, and the pardon of sin depends on the individual will of the officiating minister, then the events of salvation or damnation depend not on the repentance and faith, not on the holiness and purity, not on the imperfect but sincere obedience of the seeker; as all these may be present, and *he be yet lost*. Had there been no other corruption than this, there was ample cause and necessity for the Reformation.

The best point of view from which to survey the system of ecclesiastical discipline, is that in which it presents itself to the newly convinced enquirer; and such is the manner in which it has been treated in this volume. The first point of investigation to such a person is the existence of an abstract Church, claiming, and justly claiming, the allegiance of every Christian. When this is done, the next point is to see that, by the very nature of the claims put forth in Scripture for the Church, she must be visible, and have the power of admitting and reconciling members to her communion—of expelling the unworthy. The next subject of enquiry will be, how far, as the Scriptures are handed to us on the authority of the Church, it is lawful or even possible to make each a test of the other; and when this is done, what

remains is to examine and ascertain the marks whereby the true Church may be known among a vast variety of differing communions. The Anglican Churchman has, then, to show that all these marks apply to his own Church ; and he will, therefore, do well to investigate in the concrete what he has before judged of in the abstract. He will take the chief points of Anglican discipline, and separately compare them with those of the apostolic and post-apostolic ages down to the end of the third century ; he will note the progress of heresy, and examine the creeds and other formulæ which were intended as bulwarks against it ; and he will thus see gradually cleared up the right, or rather the duty, of the Church to enforce the acceptance by all her members of such safeguards. He will next examine the question of apostolical succession ; and when he sees this to be a personal, perpetual, and episcopal one, he will be led to perceive, that what at first seemed so exclusive, and to modern ears so illiberal, is in fact not more so than the decree, “He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; and he that believeth not, shall be damned :” and this will appear still more plainly, when he discovers, in the course of his investigations, that there never has been *purity of doctrine* long preserved without apostolicity of discipline.

The student will now be prepared to find, that, unless apostolically administered, the sacraments cannot be valid, or rather are no sacraments at all ; and here he will admit the new proof which will break upon him of the vast importance of public Christian education and Church instruction, commensurate with the population of every country. If he be of a haughty and Pharisaic spirit, he may conclude and pronounce that all persons not within the pale of an apostolic Church are not Christians, and have therefore no chance of salvation ; if he be humble and charitably devout, he will lament that men, who really love the Lord Jesus Christ, should reject great privileges and unspeakable blessings, through what must be called a judicial darkness ; he will pray that their errors may not be laid to their charge—that they may be reconciled to Christ’s visible Church ; he will do all he can towards the attainment of so desirable an end, and, if unsuccessful, will leave them in hope to the

mercies of God, who, through his holy apostle St. Paul, has declared, that if they build on the right foundation, even though they build wood, hay, and stubble, and in that day their work perish, they themselves shall be saved, *yet so as by fire*. One point more will attract his attention : he will be told by schismatics, from time to time, of the conversions wrought by their means—of the souls saved by their exertions ; and while he trusts and hopes that such statements may be true, he will recollect at the same time that success, real success in the ministry, is no proof that the minister is truly called to the work : he will remember that St. Paul mentions some persons who preached Christ of contention, thinking to add affliction to his bonds ; these, then, were unholy men, preaching the Gospel through unholy motives, uncalled by the apostles to the ministry, and surely uncalled to it by the Spirit of God : yet when St. Paul spoke concerning these independent ministers of his day, he rejoices that they did preach ; hence we learn that they did good—in other words, “ they had seals to their ministry,” or the apostle would not have rejoiced in their conduct. They were assuredly not benefitting themselves, for their motives are given to us : hence we infer, from the apostle’s rejoicing, that they were benefitting the Church ; for he never would have rejoiced in conduct which did no good to anybody, and exhibited the most unholy tempers in the hearts of the doers.

Thus, then, does the student of ecclesiastical discipline find himself armed against schismatic sophistry, and careless of the imputation of illiberality. He has a model before him, by which he can safely test the apostolicity of his own Church, viz., the Church primitive ; and he will feel, not a fierce indignation, but a tender pity for those whom the enemy of souls has drawn away from the visible flock of Christ. He will, lastly, be very cautious about things called indifferent—for truth in matters connected with religion is too important to be compromised in any point ; and he will distrust his private judgment, and defer to that of the Church, when authoritatively expressed, even though he may deem the subject of slight moment.

We shall close this Introduction with a passage from a contemporaneous writer :—“ Man wants not argument, but autho-

rity; he wants not so much to have his reasoning powers appealed to, as to have the weight of undoubted and unquestionable duty laid on his conscience."

A few words may be necessary as to the design of this volume, and also as to the manner of its execution. Its object, then, is to be, not so much a book for reference, as a book for reading. For this reason the originals of the passages cited from Greek and Latin writers, by the Fathers of our own Church, have, save in a few instances, been withheld. It was deemed that they would have unnecessarily augmented the bulk of the volume, without proportionably adding to its value. For the same cause also all parade of learning has been avoided, both in the Prefaces and Introduction, and also in the Notes. The selection of Treatises and Tracts has been made with a view to form, as far as possible, an entire view of *Anglican Church Discipline*; and the Prefaces may be read consecutively, and will be found to form an essay on the same subject.

It cannot be expected that, on some points of minor importance, an entire unanimity could be found to prevail, even among the best writers on discipline; nor will the Tracts in the present volume be found in all cases free from such discrepancy. It will, however, be observed, that in such cases the two writers are adduced to prove that in which both agree: thus when Waterland denies, and Hooker admits, the *validity* of lay baptism, both may be cited to prove its *unlawfulness*.

It is the object of this book to bring before the mind of the reader, first, the Church in the abstract; secondly, to apply the marks of Christ's Catholic Church to existing communions; thirdly, to explain the nature and office of the Christian priesthood; fourthly, to regard the Church with reference to schism and heresy; and, lastly, to consider her relation to the State, and the important question of Patronage.

If but a small portion of success should, by the Divine blessing, accompany these endeavours, the Editor will not think his time and labour misspent.

C.

CAMBRIDGE.

Feast of St. Edmund, 1841.

PREFACE.

ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE, much as the subject has been neglected of late—at least, till within the last ten years—is scarcely less important than ECCLESIASTICAL DOCTRINE. From the period of the Reformation to that of the Revolution, it occupied the thoughts, in no small degree, of almost every scholar—every point which it presented was accurately investigated; and the student of later times has but to recur to the tomes of Field, and Thorndike, and Ferne, and Hooker, and may be fully satisfied that subsequent ages have added nothing either to the soundness of their deductions or to the extent of their enquiries. But at the period of the Revolution, the discipline of the Church assumed a new form: the more stringent of her regulations were allowed to become gradually obsolete; an age of *liberal* interpretation went hand in hand with what were termed “free institutions;” and it was soon tacitly allowed that “*a man’s religion was a matter between himself and his God.*” Into that *vexatissima quæstio*—the justifiableness or unjustifiableness, in a religious point of view, of the Revolution—we shall not, of course, enter: we will merely observe, that the *principles* which produced it did, when logically or illogically carried out, reduce the Church to something very like a dead letter; and, *as is invariably the case, doctrine* declined with discipline, till, in the time of the Wesleys, there was comparatively little either of one or the other. A few reflections will show us that this is a necessary consequence, and that the *only* means of preserving evangelical truth is to establish apostolical order. Those who have read the tract of Thorndike, with which the last volume commenced, will find ably demonstrated what we can here only assert, viz., that the Church, *as*

such, has no *temporal* power, but stands only by her right of holding assemblies—that *this* right is proper, perfect, and unalienable, depending upon no government, and derived from God only. Hence it follows that, for spiritual offences, spiritual penalties alone can be enforced; and the greatest of these is the major excommunication.

Now if it should be here said that temporal punishments *have* been inflicted for spiritual offences, as, *e. g.*, for heresy; and also that the major excommunication is, by its very nature, a temporal as well as a spiritual punishment; we reply, first, that the temporal penalties—death, banishment, and torture, for example—which have been inflicted by spiritual courts, and for spiritual offences, were acts of *civil* tyranny committed by ecclesiastical persons, and carried into execution by virtue of a *civil* power lodged—we grant, very wrongly—in their hands; they were perpetrated by individuals in their character of inquisitors, not in that of priests—of *courts* having powers delegated to them by *the State*, not of persons exercising a commission derived from Christ through his apostles. The claim of divine authority set up by the persons in question, need in no manner affect this determination; for it will be sufficient to remember, that an inquisition could only exist under a despotic government, and in a Popish country—circumstances by no means essential to the well-being of a Christian Church. In the second place, we answer, that if the major excommunication be in any case a temporal punishment, it is *accidentally*, and not *essentially* so; for what temporal inconvenience would it entail upon an Englishman in the present century?

Since, then, the Church, *as such*, has merely the power of visiting spiritual offences with spiritual penalties (and that she has that power is to be proved by the New Testament, and is ably demonstrated by Thorndike and others), it becomes a matter of importance to know whether those penalties which she *can* inflict are formidable enough that men should take any trouble to avoid them. The greatest of these is, as we have already observed, the major excommunication; and this, in a *temporal* point of view, *can* be no punishment in a country where nineteen twentieths of the population are *virtually self-*

excommunicated. Viewed, however, spiritually, the case becomes greatly altered; and the entire cutting off from Christ's Church, which it implies, cannot be regarded as other than a very severe punishment. But so closely are all the links of the ecclesiastical chain connected, that even here we must pause, and give place to two fresh queries. First, what is the Church? And this we shall find to involve the second, viz., what is the right of private judgment? For, first, what is the Church? "It is (replies the Romanist) that body of which St. Peter's successor is, under God, the head; it is episcopally governed, preserves the apostolical succession, is infallible and indefectible; it has the three orders of ministers, and the seven sacraments instituted by the apostles; it agrees in the three creeds of antiquity, and that also of Pius IV.; and its doctrines were last finally settled at the Council of Trent. These are (says the Romanist) the marks of the true Church." The Reformed Episcopalian—the Anglo-Catholic, for instance—denies the exclusive claim of the Roman Church; he rejects, as essential parts of ecclesiastical truth, subjection to the see of Rome—the doctrinal infallibility of *any* branch of Christ's Church—five of the Roman sacraments, and one of the creeds, viz., that of Pius IV.—and acknowledges no authority in the Council of Trent. Of what *then* remains, the various sects of Dissenters repudiate, some more, and some less; till we come at last to the *soi-disant* philosophical Socinian, who rejects the doctrine of the atonement, and denies even the abstract existence of a Church.

Now if all these, with the sole exception of the last named, are really branches of Christ's Visible and Catholic Church, then excommunication becomes at once a mere "*brutum fulmen*;" for it is evident that no man, who really wishes to suppose himself in possession of Church membership, can be kept out of *all* sects, or "*branches*," by a mere exclusion from *one*: and if we say, as many Evangelical Dissenters, and some who would fain be called Evangelical Churchmen, do say, that Christ's Church is by its very nature only *spiritual* and *invisible*, then it is equally evident that men can have no power either to admit or to expel from it. But a corporate body, without any autho-

rity—nay, more, without any power to admit or to reject, to retain or to expel one single member, and which, moreover, has, ever since its first institution, 1840 years ago, laboured under the same disability—cannot be, practically, anything at all,—it is a mere abstract idea: and such, indeed, is “the Church” in the mind of a Dissenter. But as the Church of Christ is “a congregation of faithful men,” among whom, however, not all are necessarily faithful, but who are apostolically governed, and who have both the faith bequeathed, and the sacraments instituted, by Christ; so it follows, that if these marks be ascertained, there remains a *visible body*, which can add to its members those from without, and expel from its society those within. But here we are met by the most difficult of all queries, viz., since there are so many bodies which profess to be portions of Christ’s *visible* Church, why are we not as safe with one as with another? Is not the denial of this a denial of our “*Protestant liberty*”—“our indefeasible right of private judgment?” The former of these queries, viz., the comparative safety of one or another communion, will be gradually developed in the course of this volume; to the latter, we shall give an immediate reply.

There is no subject upon which more nonsense has been talked than what has been called “religious liberty.” Those who make speeches at hustings, and after political dinners, in favour of what they are pleased to denominate “civil and *religious* liberty,” mean invariably civil and *ecclesiastical* liberty. There is but one kind of religious liberty, which is “the glorious *liberty* of the children of God.” All that the before mentioned declaimers mean is, liberty to connect themselves with any sect, or with no sect, just as they please, without any temporal interference from ecclesiastical courts or persons. Now *this species* of religious, *i. e.*, ecclesiastical liberty flourishes in England; or, if the objector names tithes and church-rates, we will not dispute with him, however ignorant or however dishonest we may feel his objection to be; we will meet him on his own ground, and go with him to his own *El Dorado*.

In the United States of America, then, ecclesiastical liberty may surely be said to prevail. Yet the Anglo-American Church

assures the enquirer, after reciting to him the Creed of St. Athanasius, "This is the Catholic faith, which if a man keep not whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Every sect of *orthodox* ! Dissenters will give him, in varied ways, their damnatory clauses ; and even there he will find none but the Socinian who will tell him that he may believe, with spiritual safety, as much or as little as he pleases. The right of private judgment, then, is a purely *civil* right ; and, in a *spiritual* sense, neither is now, nor ever was acknowledged by any body of Christian men. Each Church, and each body of schismatics, say the same thing in this respect : "We cannot compel you to profess, much less to believe, our tenets ; but if you do not believe the truth you will be damned." We do not deny that a greater or a less latitude is given by these various bodies on points which they deem non-essential ; but all have their essentials, on which they allow no latitude at all, or, in other words, no right of private judgment. We now, therefore, return to the proposition from which we set out ; but we have cleared it of some preliminary difficulties, and shall probably be able to see at once, that the Church must, by the very fact of her existence, be possessed of some powers, and that the right of admitting new members, and expelling faulty ones, is one of the powers which she does possess. We apprehend that none will deny this, save those who at the same time deny the existence of a Church at all. And here we have with us nearly all who *call* themselves Christians, and who *all* speak of *Church membership*, however they define it, as a *duty* as well as a *privilege*.

Let it, then, be granted that there *is* a Church, that she has the powers of binding and loosing (as above explained), and that allegiance is due to her from all men. We are thus brought, as it were, insensibly to the question—not, what is the Church ? but, *which* is the Church ? And *this* is a question of evidence. The Church of Rome tells the enquirer—you receive the Bible, mediately on the authority of the Church, as the revealed word of God ; but you receive the Church itself *immediately* as the embodied will of God. Evidence, therefore, has nothing to do with your reception of the Church, much less evidence derived

from the Bible. The Anglican Church, on the contrary, allows that the Bible is *received* on the authority of the Church, but commands it to be *retained on its own*. She puts into the hands of the enquirer the *word*, and tells him its divine origin; but she at the same time enjoins him to examine it for its *intrinsic* evidences—to compare it with history, and philosophy, and tradition, and philology; and then, when he has well sifted the evidences on which it rests, to test *her claims, her doctrines, and her ordinances*, by this acknowledged standard. Let us suppose, then, that the student has thoroughly studied the Scriptures, and is satisfied that they are what they claim to be—the revealed word of God: it becomes at once evident that his reason has *done* its task. Satisfied that they are divine, he has no longer the right of objecting. He may find mysteries, but he must reverently receive them; he may find apparent contradictions, but if he fail in reconciling them, he must be content to acknowledge his failure, and to acquiesce in an *imperfect* knowledge; he may find things contrary to his preconceived notions, but he must therefore reject those preconceived notions as erroneous.

Let us next suppose that an equally severe investigation has convinced him, that the claim made upon him by the Church is one authorized by the Scriptures. A new series of duties devolves upon him; and, in like manner as before, reason has done her work. To the discipline of the Church he must submit, however severe he may consider it; to her doctrines he must assent, for he has already acknowledged them to be scriptural; and should he be in doubt as to any controversy, he must take her decision. If he refuse any one of these, he rebels *immediately* against God's *Church*, and *mediately* against God's *word*.

Be it observed, that in all this we say nothing about any ecclesiastical body by name; we plead not for the Anglican Church—for the Roman Church—for the Greek Church—but simply for *the Church Catholic*; and so far it seems probable that we shall have the assent of all nominal Christians. The Baptist and the Wesleyan may agree with us, for our first point of difference is yet to come; it is, namely, *what* constitutes the Church Catholic? If it be supposed that such do not acknow-

ledge "the Church" as any authority in "controversies of faith," we reply, every congregation has, either orally or in writing, certain creeds or articles, and from these if any member swerve *openly* he is disowned, or expelled, or *excommunicated*: and by this act we have demonstrated to us all that we can desire, for it implies a full acknowledgment of the abstract *right* for which we contend, with its correlative *duty*; it exhibits *ecclesiastical liberty*, conjointly with religious restrictions, and it proves the utter nullity of all objections against Episcopacy and the Athanasian Creed on the ground of the right of private judgment.

We may go one step further ere we come to the disputed question, and this one step we will take before closing this Preface. The Church Catholic is the sole *authorized* channel of spiritual blessings to the people—we do not say the *only* channel, for that would limit the mercies of God, which are, we know, boundless; but we say, the sole *authorized* channel, because whatever is bestowed by him out of the Church is not covenanted. St. Paul, when he said "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is;" our Lord, when he said "And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican;" and again, "With such have thou no fellowship; no, not even to eat;" both asserted sufficient to prove our proposition. But it is capable of an easy demonstration thus: let it be granted that Church membership is a duty enjoined on Christians, and it will at once be evident, that those who neglect it can have no claim to the blessings connected with it. If spiritual blessings are *promised* to the *Church*, those only who are of the Church can expect them; just as the blessings promised in the sacraments cannot be claimed by those who never receive them. Now there are sectarians—the Quakers, for instance—who reject both the sacraments; yet we would not dare to say that, therefore, no Quaker shall be saved. Christ hath said, "He that believeth, and *is baptized*, shall be saved;" and has also commanded his disciples *to do this*, that is, to celebrate by another sacrament his dying love to mankind. If, therefore, the Quaker, who refuses to comply with either of these requisitions, be saved at all, it must be by an uncovenanted mercy. It is quite true, as

we observed in the last volume, that, *properly speaking*, God bestows *no mercies* that are not covenanted ; but we use the word here in its ordinary signification ; and it must, moreover, be borne in mind, that we are not authorized to call any man a follower of Christ, unless he keeps the commandments of Christ.

These few remarks, purposely made as general as possible, may introduce the more particular questions which will be elicited in the part and volume which they commence. Of Dr. Ferne, Bishop of Chester, and Dr. Field, the learned Dean of Gloucester, it will hardly be necessary to say that they are ranked among the highest authorities on discipline that our Church ever produced. We select a Tract from the former, setting forth the authority of the Church ; and from the latter, one on the canon and sufficiency of the Scripture.

C.

CAMBRIDGE,

The Feast of the Visitation B. V. M.

ON SUBMISSION TO THE CHURCH.

BY

HENRY FERNE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER.

Of Submission of Judgment, and external peaceable Subjection due to the Church, National or Universal, from the respective members thereof.

WHAT relation this point hath to the peace and unity of a Church, in preserving it from error, and to the reformation of a Church when error hath prevailed upon it, was insinuated in the Preface.*

There, however, while a possibility of just dissenting from the public could not be denied, a due submission, with all peaceable external subjection, *was* required: and so it was a limited, not absolute, submission which we required--the limits of it arising from the condition and concernment of the authority to which, and of the matter in which, this submission is to be yielded. The authority is public, and though not infallible, yet guiding others by an infallible rule, and most highly concerned to guide them accordingly, as being answerable for their souls. The condition of the matter also was observed to be diverse, according to the difference of belief and practice; and in each kind to be of more or less concernment, according to the nature of the things propounded to us, to be believed or practised by us. The general result was, that we ought to yield all the submission of judgment, and peaceable subjection, which such authority may require, and all that the condition of the matter will admit of. Thus much was insinuated in the former book.

Now we make a supply to that, which was briefly couched there, and discover more particularly the bounds and limits of this submission, which to fix precisely is no easy matter: for this submission must be carried even between God and men, such men as God himself hath set over us in his Church, and

* Bishop Ferne refers to a former part of the treatise from which this tract is selected, and occasionally to another treatise on the Division of the English and Roman Churches.

commanded us to hear and obey them; yet such as possibly may intrench upon his right, in taking to themselves a dominion over our faith; and if we follow them in a blind obedience and resignation of judgment wholly, we are sure to transgress in giving to *them* what is due to God: so also must this submission be carried even between man and man, by declining the Romish excess of arrogating too much to the public authority, and avoiding the other extreme of giving too much liberty to private judgment, into which Anabaptists and other sectaries run, and thereby make void the authority and office of the pastors of the Church.

Therefore, that we may better discover the bounds of due submission, we must take aim, as above said, from the consideration—

First, of the authority to which the submission is yielded. That we find seated in the Church National, or Universal, and justly requiring submission from the respective members. The Church we hear speaking her judgment by the bishops and pastors of it, either in or out of council; and whether it do speak either way secured from possibility of error, will be considerable in the yielding of our submission to it. Secondly, of the matter or things in which this submission is yielded. These we find, as was said to be, of several sorts. Some are only in opinion or belief, which, being inward, need not haply discover itself; some are in practice, as worship, discipline, rites, ceremonies, which, being outward, must needs appear. Now, in reference to both authority and matter, we shall have occasion to consider the extent of submission, from judgment and belief (which begin within), to external compliance and conformity of practice; and accordingly, in the manner of performance, this submission either stays our judgment and belief within, when it dissents, or discovers it without, but so as not to a disturbance of peace.

Judgment and reason is that light which He that lighteth every one that comes into the world puts into the mind of man, in order to his yielding assent and belief to that which is propounded. This light, as it shines inwardly to the aforesaid purpose, may not be put out by absolute submission, or resignation of judgment to man, or any company of men; but as it is a light to shine outward for direction of others, so it *may* be concealed. For though a man doth not acquiesce inwardly to that which is propounded, yet may he be silent in some cases, and forbear to publish his judgment to others. These things being premised, come we to some conclusions touching this submission.

From the consideration of authority, to which submission is due, we may say—

1. Seeing the Church speaks her judgment by the pastors and teachers in it, every such pastor is a public person, and by his office and commission for teaching, guiding, and ruling others, hath, in regard of all them, authority and public judgment, to which there is a submission due. “They sit in Moses’ chair,” and “He that despiseth you, despiseth me,” saith our Saviour. “Submit and obey,” saith St. Paul. All which is spoken of the pastors and teachers of the Church, not as joined in council, but severally taken; and so teaching what the Church has learned of Christ, and what it declares and commands agreeable to the voice of the great Pastor, speaking in the word. This conclusion is against Anabaptists and Sectaries, that make void the office and authority of the pastors of the Church; and against all others, that, acknowledging the office, do too much weaken the authority, receiving what they teach and declare with little or no other respect than if the same were spoken to them by any other men. They of the Romish Church, as they are not behindhand in giving authority to their priests or pastors, so do they acknowledge it not secured from error, and the submission due to it not to be absolute, but limited. We need not, therefore, quarrel with them here. All the business will be, to conclude upon that submission which is due to the pastors of the Church, joined or met in council, to give out the judgment of the Church.

2. Therefore we cannot but say, if they that meet either in a provincial or national, much more in a general council, be gathered together in the name of Christ, they have the promise of his presence among them, which is by the assistance of his Spirit. This is the only place, as it seems to me, which delivers a promise immediately applicable to councils, though not to them only: other places so much beaten upon by the Romanists—“I am with you to the end;” “Tell the Church;” “The gates of hell shall not prevail;” “The Spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth,” and the like, cannot be drawn to concern councils, but by many consequences; and not at all to concern them in such an infallible guidance as the Romanists would have.

Now to know the importance of this place, the promise and condition must be considered. The promise of Christ’s being in the midst of them is made, as we see, to two or three, even to the meanest ecclesiastical meeting or synod, and therefore cannot assure that infallible guidance, which, among the Romanists, is applied only to general councils, or to the Pope,

with his consistory. What then? It must needs imply such assistance as is needful and sufficient—such as we acknowledge there can be no danger for any in the Church in submitting to her definitions, when and where such assistance is given.

But for that we must look to the condition required—to be gathered together in the name of Christ; viz., with due authority from him, and with minds answerable to the end and purpose of their meeting; that is, with minds free from worldly intents and designs, and from all factious engagements, seeking unfeignedly the glory of God, and the propagation of the true Catholic faith; and, therefore, setting before them the only infallible rule of faith and truth, God's word, attending to it with due heed and submission, and with prayer (for that is express in the text) to ask for assistance. To such, so gathered in the name of Christ, the promise will be made good, and the issue will be a declaration of the truth in all matters of belief and worship.

Now for our submission. Were it certain they so met together in Christ's name, as it is certain the promise will be made good to them, if so met together, no more would remain for us to do but to submit to their definitions without any fear of danger, or farther enquiry, whether they be answerable to that infallible rule. But we must needs say—

3. It is *not* certain that they which meet in councils are so gathered together. Sometimes it is certain and notorious that they are not; as, in the second Council of Ephesus, a packed faction prevailed, to the advancing of the Eutychian heresy; and in the Romish councils for these later ages the Papal power and faction hath managed and overruled all: so apparently in their glorious Council of Trent, that it was often and openly complained of while the council was sitting, and the decrees of that council not received in France for about forty years after it was concluded. Can we say such councils are gathered in the name of Christ? or that the promise can belong to such, and the infallible assistance of God's Spirit (which the Romanists pretend) can be given to such a company of men, so gathered together, so overswayed with factious interests? or to a Pope, be he what he will be for person, so he be Pope? For such to say, "*Visum est Spiritui sancto, et nobis*;"—It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us," what wants it of blasphemous arrogancy? and what wants it of Simon Magus his sin, to think the Holy Ghost can be bought with money? or bound to a Pope that hath bought his chair, and enters Simoniacally? or to a company of men, whose votes in council are purchased with gold, or golden hopes of preferment, as it

fared with a great part of them that met at Trent, being either titulars, Pope's pensioners, or bound to him upon like worldly concerns?

But at the best, where there is not evident cause of exception, yet can there not be certainty, that they which meet in council are so gathered in the name of Christ, with such minds, purposes, and endeavours as above required. Now the issue of the promise depends upon performance of the condition; of which performance, though we may have a great presumption, in regard of their learning and judgment, and their high concernment, as being answerable for men's souls (besides the care and respect that God hath towards his Church), yet can we not have such a certainty, as simply and absolutely to ground submission of judgment and belief upon it; and, therefore, we receive their definitions concerning faith and worship, not finally or chiefly upon the presumption we have of their performance, or conformity to the condition of the promise, but upon the evidence of that conformity which their definitions have to the infallible rule. It was the care of St. Paul and of the true apostles (and so it should be of all the pastors of the Church), by the demonstration of the truth, to commend themselves to every man's conscience, that they "have not handled the word of God deceitfully." Upon this evidence or demonstration of truth the four first general councils have been so generally submitted to, so readily received by all good Christians.

But, fourthly, lest that which is said of the evidence and demonstration of truth from God's word, in order to assent or faith, be mistaken to a slighting of public authority, and submission due to it, because it may be also said (and truly) that such evidence made out of God's word by any man whatsoever, requires and obtains such assent; we must know there is an assent and belief properly due to the proposals of the Church, or doctrine of the pastors and teachers in it, and that by virtue of their office and commission which they have to teach and rule others, and that under so great a concernment as the giving account for their souls. Only this assent or belief is not at first absolute, but conditional; not final, but previous and preparatory; and so remains in the learner, as a preparation, till that evidence or demonstration come and advance it into a divine assent and final resolution, grounded upon the revelation of God's word; or else it is cashiered upon the like evidence to the contrary: for we ought to submit and obey them, till upon such evidence we can say, "It is more right to hearken unto God than unto them:" and good reason, seeing our submission to them stands upon their authority and commission which they

have to teach and guide us; therefore we must have a greater authority against them from God's word: and seeing our judgment is not to be compared with theirs, whose profession is the study or interpretation of God's word, and whose "lips preserve knowledge," therefore we must have such evidence of that greater authority on our side that is apparent to any that can use his reason, before we deny our submission to them. But some may say, if we cannot yield submission of judgment and belief, yet ought we to submit so far as not to publish it—not to oppose authority. It is true, submission, as above was insinuated, extends itself so far even to a suffering for our judgment and belief, and such submission is due to the pastors and governors of the Church by virtue of their public authority; but the consideration of submission, in the several extent of it, much depends upon the several condition of the matter in which we submit unto authority, of which presently: here we are upon the submission of judgment due unto authority, as to the inward belief; which submission we affirm to be, not absolute, but limited, and may conclude it upon the apostle's warrant, who, in one place, gives us the precept of it, and the reason of it—"Obey, submit." Why? They have the rule over you; that is, their commission and authority for teaching and guiding you; "and they watch for your souls, and must give account:" there is the high concernment. But this obedience and submission cannot be absolute, unless they alone were concerned to give account for our souls: if we must also, then are we also concerned to watch over our own souls, to see and judge what we do; and therefore the apostle, as he tells us in this place, "They have the rule over us," so in another place adds the limitation, "Not as having dominion over your faith;" and "Not as lords over God's heritage," saith St. Peter. How then? "As ministers by whom ye believe." "As helpers of your joy." Ministers, helpers, guides they are in the way of salvation: but as it is one thing for a man to follow a guide till he see apparent danger, and another thing to be led by him blindfold; so is it one thing to follow our spiritual guides with a conditional belief, or reservation to God's word—yea, and to follow them to a mistrust of our own judgment, or knowledge we have of the way; and another thing to resign up judgment and belief to them, and put out that light of reason which God hath put in us, in order to our receiving direction for the way of salvation. The first we allow and require—the other let the Church of Rome exact and gain where she can. Thus far from the consideration of authority to which submission is due. We may receive more particular directions for the extent and man-

ner of performing this submission, if we now add the consideration of the matter or things in which submission is yielded.

The matters or things wherein the Church declares her judgment, and requires submission, are of divers condition (as was above insinuated): some are matters of opinion or belief only; and these, as they are of different condition from matters of practice and outward exercise, so are they to be distinguished one from the other in the declarations of the Church; for it is considerable, in our yielding of submission, to know what things are *credenda*, or matters of belief, strictly taken for Catholic faith—such as the prime articles, Christ, God and man, and the like; or their immediate and apparent consequences—two wills in Christ, natures distinct and unconfounded: and what things again are *credibilia*—credible truths or matters of opinion or belief, largely taken. Also it is considerable what the Church hath declared as articles of faith, and what she hath showed her judgment in as credible truths, but not imposing them as articles of Catholic faith: for in case she should mistake in these, the danger in conforming our judgment to hers is the less; as if a Church upon mistake should, as many of the ancients thought, judge it credible, that the souls of just men are not admitted into the glorious presence of God till the resurrection, or that there may be some kind of purgatory after this life, turning St. Augustine's *non incredibile* into a *credibile*, but not imposing it as an article of faith, as the Church of Rome hath boldly done. So likewise matters of practice are of divers sorts, and of greater or less concernment: some of worship and adoration, some of discipline, rites, ceremony. Under matters of discipline, the observing of set times for fasting, works and performances of public penance, single life of priests, and the like, are considerable in the canons or declarations of the Church concerning them. In matters of belief or opinion, our subjection to a public judgment stands in a conformity of our judgment and belief to the public, and in the publishing or not publishing of our judgment. In matters of practice, our submission stands in the conformity of judgment, if we judge of worship, and other matters determined, as the Church judges, or in the outward exercise, if we do in these things as the Church does and practices.

Having premised thus much, come we now to more particular directions for the extent or manner of performing submission to the judgment of the Church, when she hath declared it in matters of belief or practice. As for the submission of private judgment to the public. 1. To all the determinations of the Church we owe submission, by assent and belief conditional, and

preparatory at the least; which, being given with reservation for evidence out of God's word, does both acknowledge the authority of our pastors and teachers, and withal reserve unto God his due. 2. In matters of faith and religious worship, we cannot submit to any company of men, by resignation of our judgment and belief, or standing bound to receive for faith and worship all that they shall define and impose for such; for such resignation gives to man what is due to God, and stands excluded by the condition (as above shown) of the authority, which is not infallible, and also by the condition of the matter (faith and worship), of high concernment to our own souls, and to be accounted for by ourselves; who therefore stand bound to make present and diligent search for that evidence and demonstration from God's word, upon which we may finally and securely stay our judgments and belief in such matters. 3. In other matters of opinion and credibility, or of discipline and rites, which the Church determines and proposes for such, as there is more cause for ready conformity of judgment, so is there more security or less danger in it; for such matters are either not determined by Scripture in particular, or not determinable but by several consequences: only this conformity is yielded, still with a reservation for any sufficient evidence or demonstration of truth to the contrary; else, till that come, our conformity remains secure: for here is the difference of conforming in the former points of Catholic faith or worship, and these latter of opinion, discipline, and rites; that, when the former are proposed to our belief and practice, we rest not secure till we have demonstration or evidence that they are so; but in the other we submit with security till we have evidence that they are not so as authority hath determined. Indeed, in matters of discipline and ceremony, though in themselves of small concernment, great opposition hath often been made to the judgment and determination of authority; of which I shall speak a little below, under the conformity of practice in such matters; and in the mean time let us see what cautions may be given in case of private judgment justly dissenting from the public.

If, therefore, it come to that (as possibly it may), yet for preserving of due submission, take care, first, that our dissenting be not upon any comparing or equalling our private judgment to the public and authoritative judgment of the Church—for this will be absolutely against that conditional and preparatory belief or assent with which we are to receive all her determinations; but upon the evidence of a greater authority on our side, viz., the demonstration of truth from God's word, or primitive

consent of the Catholic Church ; either of which is of more authority than the present governors of the Church. 2. That the dissenting of private judgment be only in order to a man's own believing and delivering of his own soul, for which he is to give account, not to any inconsiderate publishing of it to others ; for the light of reason, though it may not be put out, yet may, and often ought to be concealed, and a man's private judgment silenced in submission to the public. 3. If he publish or make known his dissenting, it ought to be by modest proposal to his superiors, not by clamours against the Church, to a disturbance of the peace of it, much less by force or tumult, as the manner of sectaries hath usually been ; for if he cannot internally acquiesce in the judgment of the Church, yet ought he to submit, as far as possible, externally, and to suffer for it, if need be.

But here a question may be made about these matters, in which we were said to have evidence of Scripture and primitive consent. If a Church should so far err as to judge contrary to these—as for the error of Monothelites or Eutychians, or for the worshipping of images, or any creature, with religious worship—must a man submit with silence in such a case ? I answer, the ministers of the word being, by that Church, according to God's ordinance, called to publish the Gospel and councils of God for salvation, ought to propose their contrary judgment and belief to their superiors so erring ; if they reform, it is well— if not, the other ought to declare these counsels of God ; for in this case they have greater authority (as was said) on their side, and may say to the governors of the visible Church, as the apostles did to the great council, “ Whether it be more right to hearken to you, or to God,” &c. And to this case I refer that other erroneous principle of belief (the mother of error and apostasy), that all the members of the Church are bound to receive for Catholic faith and Christian worship all that the Church whereof they are members proposes to them for such. Herein we had, and all that are still of the Roman communion have, cause to complain of that Church, and to declare dissent of judgment from it, which not only imposes purgatory, transubstantiation, and such novel errors, for articles of the Catholic faith, and commands image worship as lawful and pleasing to God ; but also holds all the members thereof bound to that former principle of misbelief, in a blind receiving all for faith and worship that shall be so proposed to them.

And this which hath been said will also speak the meaning of that submission which we profess to yield when we usually say (and not without cause), we submit our judgment, doctrine, or writings to the censure of the Church : for, first, this is not a

resignation of judgment in regard of believing, but a submission in regard of the publishing it—a putting it to the permission of the Church whether such doctrine or writings shall stand published or be silenced. Secondly: And this not in all things simply; for no man can submit his judgment and doctrine to any company of men, when he believeth and teacheth the prime articles of Catholic faith, into which all Christians are baptized, or the immediate consequences of them, which are evident to all that can use reason and judgment, or the express commands of God concerning religious worship; but it is in things more questionable, not plainly determined in Scripture, and though deducible from some confessed article or express command, yet by divers consequences. As, in the first kind, the Church hath power to silence and censure any that teach contrary to such articles or commandments, but cannot forbid to teach them: so, in the second, she hath power to silence any that teach contrary to her declared judgment in them. For it cannot be denied that the Church hath power to overrule and restrain the exercise of any man's ministry in order to the common peace and safety, she being answerable for others as well as for him whom she restrains in publishing his private judgment or belief to others.

Thus much of submission of judgment in matters of belief or practice, either in conforming to the judgment and determination of the Church therein declared, or in a fair and peaceable dissenting. Now come we to submission of practice, in a conformity of doing what the Church does and practices. The judgment we have of matters, either of belief or practice, need not haply discover itself—may for peace sake be silenced; but in matters of practice determined by the Church, and commanded to be done by us, our conformity, both in judgment and practice, must needs then appear. It was well and peaceably said of Joseph Frith (a young man, but learned and moderate), in his reply to Sir Thomas Moor, concerning transubstantiation: "Let it not (saith he) be worshipped, and think what you will, for then is the peril past." Difference of judgment may be in a Church without disturbance; but difference of practice, because apparent, endangers the peace of it. And let me here add, notwithstanding the difference of judgment in the Protestant Churches, *de modo presentiae*; yet may they well communicate together in the sacrament, because neither of them allow or practice that adoration, directed to the sacramental symbols, which the Church of Rome practices and requires of all her communicants, or spectators rather. Now for submission or conformity in matters of practice, we must remember such

matters were of different sorts and concernments—worship, adoration, discipline, order, ceremony; and then we have a double caution. First, according to the indifference of the matter, or the greater but evident concernment of it, either to yield conformity for peace sake, or forbear for conscience sake. Secondly, that such forbearance of any practice be an act of simple and bare omission, without clamour and contempt of authority, without tumult or resistance, with a readiness to suffer rather; then is there peaceable subjection, when private judgment keeps within these bounds. For such conscionable forbearance of many practices in the Church of Rome (of high concernment, and very evident), they have good cause that are within her communion; such practice is the exercise of religious worship many ways applied in that Church to the creature: such also are some superstitious rites and ceremonies, having a kind of sacramental virtue and real holiness affixed to them.

But as for rites and ceremonies, in themselves indifferent, and by the Church enjoined only with respect to order and discipline, there is no cause of inconformity or forbearance; yet in these hath there been great opposition from private judgments that could not keep within their bounds; and those places of Rom. xiv.: “He that doubteth is damned, if he eat,” and “What is not of faith is sin,” have been abused, to maintain a dissenting from the judgment of the Church, and a forbearance of the practice. We say, therefore, those places are misapplied to matters determined by public authority; against which it is not doubting, or want of faith (*i. e.*, persuasion of the lawfulness or indifference of the thing so determined), that can take place, or bear out disobedience, but evident demonstration of the thing out of God’s word to the contrary; and the reason is plain—the command of God’s word for obedience and submission to them that are over us is evident, and therefore against them we must have evidence from God’s word, to show they are mistaken in their judgment or determination of that particular. Now when a Church professes the thing determined by her to be indifferent in itself, or of a middle nature, neither commanded by God nor forbidden, and that she neither affixes any sacramental or spiritual virtue or holiness to it, nor enjoins it as worship, but only out of respect to order and discipline,—no man can have any evident demonstration, but only a doubting or mixed persuasion of the unlawfulness of such a thing; and although a man, if doubting of a thing in itself indifferent, but not determined or enjoined by authority, may by reason of his doubting have cause to forbear it; yet not in this case of the supposed determination

and injunction of authority ; for he that will then urge “he that doubteth is damned,” must remember, that he that disobeyeth is damned too. That former place of doubting having many exceptions, of which this predetermination of authority is one ; but this disobeying of authority hath only one, viz., when there is sufficient evidence of divine authority against the thing determined by human ; and so it becomes an obeying of God rather than man.

But it may be expected, because I referred the injunction of priests’ single life to matter of discipline, that I should speak particularly to the conformity of judgment and practice to it. I referred it to discipline, because anciently enjoined—not in a disparagement to marriage, which the apostle concludes “honourable in all men,” but in order to the better discharge of their duty, and priestly or ministerial function ; and I do not now dispute the difference of that ancient injunction from the now Roman exaction of single life, nor question with what fulness of authority it was enjoined, or how far, or how long binding ; but only speak to the point of submission and conformity to such judgment or determination of the Church, supposing it fully concluded and binding. Therefore I cannot but say, while it was so binding, and the governors of the Church saw reason to enjoin it, every clergyman had cause to judge, and was bound to endeavour conformity in practice, *i. e.*, to use such means, by temperance, fasting, and prayer, as conduce to preserve that continency of single life ; but if, after due use, he found himself not answerable to that state, but in the condition to which St. Paul prescribes the use of that remedy which God had ordained (marriage against burning), he was bound, notwithstanding the Church ordinance, to take to it ; and this, as it hath direct warrant from God’s word, so is it not a direct opposition to the Church ordinance, which was but conditional, as in the prohibition of marriage to fellows of colleges under the pain of loss of their fellowships. Only in this point of priests’ marriage the condition is of greater concernment—the loss of clergy, or quitting the ministerial function, which, if happened to him that hath dealt conscionably (as above) in the business, the Church must answer for it.

Thus have I endeavoured, as near as I can, to discover and fix the bounds of submission of private judgment and practice, according to the several condition of the matter wherein it is shown, and according to the divers extent and manner of performing or showing it, either to a direct conformity and compliance with the public ; or, if dissenting, yet to a yielding of all possible peaceable sub-

jection, and that, if need be, to a suffering under authority. If private judgment keep itself within the former bounds of submission, there can be no harm to the Church.

I should now speak the respect which every national or particular Church ought to bear to the universal in this point of submission ; but, before we go farther, it will be worth our pains to take a short view of some passages of St. Augustine (applicable to the business in hand) concerning authority and reason (I called them authority and evidence, or demonstration of truth), in his books, “*De Verâ Relig.*” and “*De Utilitate Credendi.*” It is his purpose there to show how authority goes before reason, in our believing or receiving the Christian faith, which by the Romanists is sometimes misapplied to the purpose of that Church, requiring belief to rest upon her authority. We may, therefore, take notice, that the writing of those books was occasioned by the Manichees, who reproached the Catholics for requiring belief of their scholars or auditors before they showed them reason; and boasted, “*Se terribili autoritate separatâ, &c.* ;—That, laying aside all supercilious authority, they would, by simple and plain reason, bring men to God.” Had this Romish infallible authority (which exacts belief simply and finally) been then pretended to in the Church, they might well have called it terrible authority, and St. Augustine could not but have spoken to it : whereas it is his only work in both books to show, that men are first moved by authority to a belief of things, before they see the reason of the things themselves. Now the belief upon this authority is but previous and preparatory (as I called it), in order to that which St. Augustine calls reason or evident knowledge of the truth. For he tells us this authority (*viz.*, of the Church proposing the Catholic faith) stands upon miracles, confirming that faith, and multitude of believers that have embraced it. And this, indeed, is the first motive to induce a man to seek, and believe he may have the true faith and religion in such a Church, such a company of believers. Again, he pleads for belief due to the authority of pastors and teachers of the Church, whom he calls “*Antistites Dei*, whom God hath set in his Church as governors and teachers.” And this is but according to the rule common to the teaching of other sciences : “*Oportet discentem credere ;*—He that is taught must give credit to him that teaches him.” Lastly, we find him everywhere speaking the end of that authority and teaching in the Church ; it is “*præcolere, procurare animum,*” or “*idoneum facere percipiendæ veritati,*—to mould and fit the mind for perceiving and embracing the truth ;” and “*preparare illuminaturo Deo*—to prepare it for the enlight-

ening of God's spirit ;" which he calls sometimes the purging of the mind (viz., from nature's ignorance, self-conceit, and love of worldly pleasures), that it may be fit to behold the clear truth ; and this is it which he calls reason, and gives it the chiefest authority : "Summa est ipsum veritatis jam cognitæ et perspicuæ autoritas." This was called evidence above, or demonstration of truth ; and cap. xxv. of the same book : "Purgationis animæ rationi, quæ ad veritatem pervenit, nullo modo preponitur humana autoritas ;—Human authority must give way to reason and evident truth, which a soul purified by faith knows and believes." Thus much in reference to that which had been spoken above of preparatory conditional belief due to, and beginning from, authority, but finally resting in the evidence and demonstration of truth : like as the belief of the Samaritans, given first to the testimony of the woman that had been with Christ, brought them out unto him, but stayed at last upon "Audivimus ipsi ;—We have heard him ourselves."

Now, in reference to that which was spoken of submission of private judgment keeping within bounds of peaceable subjection, hear what St. Augustine subjoins immediately upon the former words : "Ad hanc nulla humana superbia producit ;—To this (viz., the reason and belief of a purified mind), pride brings no man." "Quæ si non esset nec hæretici, nec schismatici essent ;—But for this pride and self-conceit (the cause why private judgments do not keep within bounds) there would be no heretics or schismatics." For it comes not to this but when "nimiâ levitate (as he speaks sometimes),—through too much lightness of judgment they are driven, tanquam palea vento superbiæ, as chaff by the puff of their own pride from the Lord's floor," or visible Church.

But what if private men, for a peaceable dissenting in judgment or practice from the visible Church, of which they were members, in points of high concernment, for belief or worship, be censured and driven from the communion of it ? They are not for all that driven from the communion of the Catholic Church, but their condition is not unlike the case of those good men which St. Augustine speaks of : "Divine Providence (saith he) suffers sometimes—viros bonos per turbulentas seditiones carnalium hominum expelli de congregatione Christianâ—good men to be cast out of the communion of the visible Church, through the turbulent seditions of carnal men ;" declaring also, how they ought to behave themselves in that condition patiently and constantly, by charity to those to whose violence they gave way, and perseverance in the faith of the Catholic Church : "Sine conventiculorum segregacione—without making conven-

ticles apart; et testimonio suo juvantes eam fidem quam in ecclesiâ—and by their witness and profession helping that faith which they know is still taught in the Church.” These, saith he, thus serving God in secret, “Pater videns in occulto coronat;—Their Father, which sees in secret, crowns and rewards.” Observe, he speaks here of private men, and so do we hitherto; but he supposes them cast out of the Church in which the Catholic faith is truly professed with due Christian worship, and therefore saith, examples of such expelled good men are rare; whereas we suppose such to be cast out from the visible communion upon the cause of faith and worship, and those turbulent persons to be the chief rulers casting them out upon that account; and, therefore, with more advantage may conclude, it is well with such in the sight of God that sees in secret. Indeed, the condition of the Catholic Church being such as it was in St. Augustine’s days, it could not but be rare to find such examples; but if he had seen these latter ages, and the corruption of faith and worship, upheld by pride and tyranny of the chief rulers (especially within the communion of the Romish Church), he might have seen examples great store of good men and pious, for peaceable dissenting or desiring reformation, cast out and persecuted.

Now, in the last place, of the respect which National Churches have and ought to have to the Universal, as to this point of submission, we need not say much. 1. Several National Churches, being parts, as it were, and members, making one whole Church, called the Catholic, in some proportion ought to bear like definitions and practices of the Catholic Church, as inferior or private persons to the particular National Church of which they are members: in some proportion, I say, but with advantage to a National Church, in this point of judgment, above what is allowed proportionable to private persons; for they have only judgment of discretion in order to their own believing, whereas a National Church hath public judgment, both in receiving the decrees of the Universal Church, or in making some herself, and in proposing them to others whom she is to guide and answer for; and so can make public reformation when there is cause for it, and constitute a visible Church, independent, in point of government, of any other visible Church; or rather can continue a visible Church as it was before, but with this difference from what it was before, that it now stands reformed, or purged from many errors, and freed from the tyranny of foreign power under which it was before: and so it was with the Church of England reforming. And all this a National Church may so much the

rather do, when the Universal stands so divided and distracted (as it hath for these latter ages), that a free general council cannot be expected. 2. But the Church Universal hath heretofore declared her judgment in general councils, free and unquestionable: doth not every National Church (by name, this of England) owe submission of judgment to them? I answer—as for matters of faith and worship, there is no need that any National Church should dissent from any definition, concerning that matter, made or declared by any of the undoubted general councils of the Church, such as have not been fully excepted against; and let any Romanist show that the Church of England hath receded from the judgment of such councils, either in matters of faith or worship.

As for matters of practice and discipline (under which I named priests' single life, because they clamour against us as receding therein from the Catholic Church), I may say generally of such points, that the Church in them went upon prudential motives and reasons with respect to conveniences and inconveniences, in those times considerable; and, therefore, we find it sometimes letting loose the reins of discipline, sometimes drawing them straighter, according to the exigency of times, or condition of persons. Neither could they that made those canons intend to bind the Church for ever, which in after ages might have like cause, upon experience of inconveniences, to loosen that which they held stricter; as we find in the point of penances, and also in this very point of single life, if we look into the practice of it in several ages and countries. Nor was it necessary that this remission or relaxation should always expect the like authority of councils to decree it; but it might be lawfully done by any National Church within itself, upon long experience of the inconveniences; and that especially when a free general council cannot be expected.

As to this point of priests' single life, here I will hint only these particulars. 1. It was conformable to the former reason; that Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope, acknowledged often: "As at first they saw cause to forbid priests' marriage, so now there was greater cause to leave it free to them again." 2. The sixth General Council in Trullo, held in the seventh century, was the first general council that forbade bishops to have or retain their wives, canon xii., where they excuse themselves for varying from the fifth canon of the apostles (which forbade bishops to put them away), by a pretence conformable still to the former reason, viz., because stricter discipline was fitter for their times than it was for the beginnings of Christianity. 3. That general council doth

permit priests and deacons to keep their wives, decreeing those to be deposed that cause them to forsake their wives after ordination, canon xiii., where the council expressly, and by name, sets a black note upon the Roman Church for doing so; and canon lv. censures the Church again for their custom of fasting on Saturdays. For this cause some Romanists quarrel at and make exceptions against this council, as not general or lawful, yet the more reasonable among them admit of it; and so we leave them to answer for their dissenting from a general council upon a double score, as appears by the thirteenth and fifty-fifth canons.

But what tell we them of answering it to any council, that will have the whole Catholic Church bound to submit to the decrees of their Church? Let us see, then, what submission the Church of Rome requires of all within her communion, and, indeed, of all Christians, under pain of damnation. We may deliver it, in general, thus:—In all that she defines, she requires, or exacts rather, absolute submission of belief and judgment; but then we say, she cannot make good the ground on which she requires it, viz., infallible guidance. In other things not defined she requires submission of silence, which she imposes on both parties, as the heat of the controversy between them seems to require. And this submission we acknowledge due to authority in every Church, not only to the authority of the chief pastors in that Church, but also of the supreme civil power; this imposing of silence being not a definitive sentence for determination of doctrine, but a suspending sentence for ceasing of the debate, and providing for public peace.

What strict submission of belief the Church of Rome requires to all her definitions, we may see by the oath, set out by Pius IV., to be taken by every bishop, wherein, after the recital of the whole Romish faith, as it is patched up with the Tridentine articles, follows that very clause which we find in the Athanasian Creed subjoined to the Catholic faith there expressed—“*Hæc est fides Catholica, extra quam;—This is the Catholic faith, without which none can be saved.*” So that they which join themselves to that Church stand bound to believe all which that Church at present doth, or shall hereafter propose to be believed; let them place the judgment of that Church where they will, in the pope or council.

Cardinal Bellarmine, who, according to the divinity professed at Rome, and more generally obtaining in that Church, reduces all to the judgment of the Pope, is very strict in exacting this submission of belief. In his fourth book, “*De Pontif Rom.*,” he disputes of the Pope’s infallibility, and there we find, “*Non*

esse subditorum de hac re dubitare, sed simpliciter obedire ;— It is not for subjects or inferiors to doubt of this matter (viz., whether the Pope can or doth err), but simply to obey.” And to show the strength of this obligation, and the inconvenience that would fall upon the Church, if the Pope be subject to err in defining or commanding anything to the Church, he hesitates not to express it thus: “Si papa erraret præcipiendo, &c. ;—If the Pope should err in commanding vice and forbidding virtue, the Church were bound to believe—vitia esse bona, et virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare—that vice was good, virtue evil, unless it would sin against conscience.” To mollify the harshness of this, he inserts presently “in rebus dubiis,” as if this submission belonged only to his commands and definitions in doubtful matters; which, as it is not all they say, so is it to little purpose: for if he please to judge the most apparent thing to be doubtful (as whether our Saviour appointed the cup to be received by the people), and define against it, then are all in the Church bound to believe so, or sin against conscience.

And, indeed, it necessarily follows, upon their ground and reason of believing all things, viz., the Papal infallibility. Now considering what Popes have been, and may be, how readily may all of that persuasion be brought under the wo denounced by the prophet against those that call good evil, light darkness, truth error, virtue vice. . Thus have the people been put off with half communion, contrary to our Saviour’s institution, and made to believe it is not so; thus brought to bow down to graven images, and to worship them, contrary to the express words of God’s command, and yet bound to believe it is not so; thus have they been raised here into rebellions and treasons against their natural prince, upon Pope Pius V’s bulls, and thereupon to believe rebellion was good service to God and his Church; thus princes themselves have been brought to incestuous marriages, and to believe them not sinful upon the Pope’s dispensation—as our Henry VIII. many years believed, till, upon better examination, he saw how vain and ungrounded the judgment and sentence of the Pope was.

But they are not all agreed about this ground of belief (Papal infallibility); for though it be publicly professed, and maintained in their schools, especially where the Jesuits are in the chair—and none within the Pope’s reach dare openly gainsay it—yet is it not everywhere believed within the Romish communion. A fair pretence it carries to advance the work of that Church, or court of Rome rather, and the Romish emissaries make good advantage of it, when they have to deal with the unwary and

more simple sort of Christians; but when it falls under conscientious examination, what submission of belief it gains from those of that communion, we may see by these examples. Clement VII. was resolute in his sentence for the incestuous marriage of Henry VIII.; yet both universities of this land, with many abroad, some of Italy itself, declared against it. Pope Paul V. was as peremptory in his definitive sentence against the Venetians; yet was resisted by that whole state and their subjects, and in the end forced to recall it. And many now living can remember what difference there was among the Romish Catholics here, upon the same Pope's breves sent out against the oath of allegiance; some urging obedience to them, some refusing, and showing their reasons for their dissenting: which may be seen drawn up in a book set out by Mr. William Howard, one of the Romish communion, and do speak the reasonableness of what is said by us, for the judgment of discretion allowed to private persons, or inferiors.

When there comes shame upon any Papal sentence, as in the former examples, they have excuses from the condition of the matter defined, or the concernment of it to the Church, or the intention of the Pope in defining it, with a distinction of *in* and *out* of his chair, to play fast and loose by; for they can shift him *into* it, or *out* of it, according to the event and success of his definitive judgment. But those examples will not admit of such exceptions, for though *in hypothesi* they were in and about particular actions and persons, yet *in thesi* they were of general concernment, as may be easily made to appear; and whether the Pope was in his chair or no, when he sent forth such definitive sentence, I know not; but, methinks, in business of such concernment to the Church and Christian people, it should have beseemed him to give his judgment, not carelessly as a private doctor, but as the pastor general of the Church, and it had been worth his pains to go up to his chair for infallible determination; and if he did it not then, when so much cause, so much time to do it, when shall any man ever know certainly that the Pope defined or spake such or such a thing in his chair, that there may be sure ground for belief and obedience?

Bellarmino, in the place above cited, treating of the Pope's infallibility, sets down several opinions about it, of which this is one—that the Pope may be an heretic, and teach heresy. This opinion he will not say is fully heretical, because they are tolerated in the Church that hold it; but “*hæresi proxima*,—at next door to heresy.” Yet, as near as it is to heresy, it is the sentence generally of the Popish Church in France, and other places too; and see their agreement. This may not be taught

at Rome, nor the contrary of it at Paris. Now albeit this party hath unanswerable reasons and arguments for rejecting the infallibility of the Papal judgment, and setting up a general council above him, which would be good out of the mouth of a Protestant; yet they also, when they have to deal with Protestants, tell of the infallible guidance of the Roman Church, of the Pope as vicar of Christ and the visible head of his Church, and boast of their Church as built upon the Rock: in all which they thwart themselves; for what privilege (of infallibility or other) can the Roman Church pretend to above other but by St. Peter, and then must it be derived by his supposed successors, the bishops of that Church? or how can they affirm the Pope to be head, and deny him the supremacy, or say a council is above him? or how apply that promise of the Rock to their Church, but by allowing St. Peter, and so his successors, to be that Rock, and consequently to give the stability and infallibility to their Church, if that place prove any to be in it? This party, indeed, will say, they make the Pope but a ministerial head to the Church. Which, how it reconciles the premises, or saves all they pretend to by the Pope, I see not; but surely it sets them at a wide difference with their fellow Catholics who are of a contrary persuasion. Let them agree it among themselves, yet note we their disagreement in points of such high concernment as touch the very ground-work of their faith, and consequently their uncertainty where to state the infallibility; and thereupon their unreasonableness in exacting (upon that pretence of infallible guidance) absolute submission of belief to all things defined and propounded by that Church: and, lastly, their vanity in thinking to satisfy us with saying, they all agree in yielding submission to all that is defined by general councils, and that the differences we object to them about pope and council are not defined.

For, first, they must not here put us off with submission of silence, or external peaceable subjection (which requires, not that infallible guidance the Church of Rome boasts of, but an authoritative judgment, or unappealable authority, which we quarrel not, if well stated, as will appear presently); but they must speak that agreement of theirs in yielding submission of belief: and then it will not serve their turns to tell us, when we charge them with disagreement in the grounds of their belief, that they all agree in yielding submission, &c. For seeing infallible judgment is the ground with them of that submission of belief, and they cannot agree how that infallibility accrues, or where it is to be stated in council, pope, or partly in both (the reasons of the one part being sufficient to destroy the

other), it must needs appear how much they disagree in and about the very ground-work of their belief. They would think it strange to hear us say, we and they do not disagree in the grounds of our belief, because we both agree in these generals—that all divine revelation is to be believed; yea, all that is revealed in Scripture ought to be believed: for if we enquire farther into the means of conveying divine revelation, we cannot admit tradition in so careless and uncertain a sense as they do; or if we look into the meaning of Scripture, we cannot allow of their pretended infallible judge or interpreter: and they stick not to call us heretics for our disagreement with them. So for their principle in which they boast of their universal agreement (submission to all that is defined), if we enquire into the reason and ground of it (infallible judgment in their definitions), we find wide differences and contrary persuasions among them; and Bellarmine could not find it in his heart to make them heretics that are against stating the infallibility in the Pope, and therefore called their persuasion “*hæresi proxima*,—next door to heresy,” as we heard above: and mark his reason there why it is not “*propriè hæretica*,” fully and properly so, “*Nam adhuc ab Ecclesiâ tolerantur*;—They are still tolerated of the Church that hold it:” a reason why he might not speak as he thought; he thought it heresy, no question, but might not call it so, for saving the union of their Church. Union and agreement among Christians is to be sought for by all fair means, and to be held up on all just grounds; and, in order to it, submission unto authority is necessary, and toleration again from authority may be sometime and in some things needful; but the Church of Rome, boasting of her unity, and the means she hath for it (infallible judgment in her definitions), and thereupon requiring not only external or peaceable subjection, but submission of belief, may be ashamed, for preserving of her unity, to tolerate such different persuasions or doctrines, so near unto heresy. And this also shows the vanity of what they farther say, that the points they differ in (as whether a pope be above a council, whether infallible, &c.) are not defined, and therefore general submission of belief, or uniform agreement, is not required. Why, then, say we, is that doctrine tolerated amongst them, that is “*proxima hæresi*,—so near to heresy,” as we heard above? Why is not that defined and stated, which is the ground of believing all other things that are defined? The reason is plain. The Pope knows well enough, if those points were defined one way, they would not be generally believed, and that it is better to have them instilled in private into the minds of men by his trusty emissaries, than to have them pub-

licly defined; and more for his advantage to have men brought to a persuasion of them in favour of his power, than to hazard the peremptory belief of them either way. Other means there are, the chains of force and policy, to hold all together; and I doubt not but many are kept from revolting, whose learning and conscience shows them a more excellent way than that of the Romish Church.

Some there are, as I hear, of the more moderate sort of Romanists, which will not now seem to contend for an infallible judgment in their Church, but to be content with an unappealable authority. This may be good doctrine at Paris, but not at Rome; and we may farther say, that such authority or authoritative judgment, being rightly stated (for it must be placed somewhere), as it hurts not us, so doth it not help them.

For, first, they forsake the ground-work or formal reason of their belief, which is the authority and testimony of their Church; and it must be either infallible, or not that thing into which their faith can be resolved: for albeit such an unappealable authority may in some sort provide for external peace, yet can it not certainly and finally stay belief. 2. There may be the same objections be made against it which they usually reproach us with for want of that pretended infallibility, viz., that men are so left to their own reason, that there is not without it sufficient means for peace and unity: for although, when we dissent from that unappealable authority, in matter of belief and opinion, we be not happily bound to discover it—at least, to the disturbance of the peace of the Church; yet if the error be in commanding something for religious worship (as adoration of sacrament or images), that must needs discover and show itself in outward practice: the unappealable authority cannot secure the external submission or compliance. In civil affairs, indeed, unappealable authority may absolutely require external submission, because by submitting to the wrong judgment or sentence of such authority, the things we recede from for peace sake are but temporals, and in our own power to dispose of; but it is not so in the matters of the soul and conscience, in the points of belief and worship, in which we must have the evidence of that which is confessedly infallible to stay upon.

But what if men will be perverse (as we have seen in these days) to pretend error and superstition in worship, where there is none? Who shall judge? They that so oft put this question to us cannot well resolve it themselves; for who shall judge (say we to them), pope or council? They cannot agree it where the infallibility rests; and if either or both of them must judge, shall their judgment be taken for infallible? Nei-

ther are they here resolved, some contending for infallible, some content with unappealable authority. As for us, we answer unanimously, the Church shall judge, be it national or universal, and take order with such persons. By the Church here, we mean the guides and governors that have public judgment and authority in every National Church, or in the Catholic assembled in a general council; and by judging, we mean their defining or demonstrating the truth, according to the infallible rule of God's word, and their sentencing of persons refractory to due punishment. So the Church shall judge, either to the convincing and satisfying, or to the censuring and punishing of such persons; who are to answer unto God also for their disobedience. For the Church, or public authority, as it hath the advantage of judgment above all inferior or private persons, so of power too, to proceed, according to that judgment, against the obstinate. No other means of restraint had the ancient Church, as was insinuated in sect. xiii. of the former book.

To conclude. This unappealable and not infallible authority, as it cannot consist with the main principle of Romish belief, so may it well enough stand with anything asserted by us; and were it stated aright (not in the Pope, but in every National Church immediately, and in a General Council finally), I suppose there needed not be any matter of difference about it. And hitherto of submission of judgment and practice to the definitions and constitutions of a Church.

Of Reformation begun under Henry VIII., advanced under King Edward, perfected under Queen Elizabeth, and the warrantableness of it.

THAT the English Reformation was not regular and warrantable, but carried against the consent of the bishops of this land, is the usual reproach of the Romanists. The Reformation was begun under Henry VIII., and perfected under Queen Elizabeth, not without a just national synod; and that in the Reformation under Henry VIII. there was no displacing of bishops, but all was passed by general consent. That late Romish convert, as he pretends himself to be, that wrote the reproachful pamphlet, intitled "The Obit of Prelatic Protestancy," took notice of what I had said, and returns the reproach double upon us,

saying, "All the bishops of this nation were excluded and imprisoned when the doctors' party first decreed the breach; so that they had no more a national synod than those that could congregate when they pleased, as many of their own party, and style a synod, as the Presbyterians did." So he.

We will consider, then, how the Reformation was begun, carried on, and perfected; which will appear to be so done as the Romanist can have no just cause to reprove, nor the Presbyterian, or any sectaries, to pretend to the like.

The first Reformation began under Henry VIII., in the ejection of Papal jurisdiction, with some superstitious abuses. And here I must first say, and desire the reader to take notice, that to this first and main point of Reformation, the ejecting of that foreign jurisdiction, there needed no vote of national synod or consent of bishops—the king himself being a sufficient and competent judge in that cause of vindicating his own rights, upon which that Papal jurisdiction was a plain usurpation: and therefore the like had been often done by kings of this realm, before Henry VIII., putting their subjects under *premunire*, that did acknowledge such an usurped power, or had recourse to Rome in any cause or matter of jurisdiction. But, secondly, we can say, and that most truly, that it was carried with the general consent of the bishops of this land in full synod, decreeing, not a breach, but the casting off and renouncing of Papal supremacy, upon which the first breach followed: and so Saunders calls it "*Schisma Henricianum*;—King Henry's Schism."

Now if Romanists will say, those bishops, and the rest of the clergy assembled in that synod, were of their party, because most of the Romish doctrine was still retained, then let them say that their party first made the breach, and cease to lay any imputation upon us for it, or for doing the like, upon greater cause, under Queen Elizabeth. However, their party or ours, they must confess the first breach was then made, and the Reformation then begun, and that by full consent of the bishops of this nation, in full synod.

If again they say—as usually it is said by them of the Romish party—that synod was not free, the bishops and the rest being compelled, by fear, to vote that which they after repented of and retracted under Queen Mary—to say nothing of the liberty of Papal councils, where none can speak freely, without note of heresy or danger of inquisition—it is apparent they voted the like again three years after; and it is strange that the passion of fear should continue so long; or that so many learned men should not, in sixteen years more, see their error, and retract

it, till there came a queen that discovered herself to be of another mind. But if they were compelled, through fear, so to vote, what compelled them so to write, and to make good, by such forcible arguments, what they had voted, as the most learned of them did? What compelled them, I say, but the evidence of truth? And if they voluntarily retracted what they voted in synod, why did they not as voluntarily answer their own arguments? They are yet to be seen, and will remain as a clear evidence of the warrantableness of that synodical vote, upon which the first breach followed.

Proceed we now to King Edward's time, under whom the Reformation was carried on and the breach continued. And here, if we make enquiry how it stood with the bishops of the land, we find the two archbishops, Cranmer and Holdgate, together with Thirlby and divers other bishops made in King Henry's time, continuing in their places unmolested all King Edward's reign. As for those few who at last were removed (*viz.*, Bonner, Gardiner, Heath, Day, and Vessey), none of them were imprisoned till the third year of the king, except Gardiner and Bonner, who, for some misdemeanors, felt a short restraint; from which, upon submission, being released, they enjoyed their bishoprics till the end of the king's third year. Neither can I find that any of them during that time was excluded from sitting in Parliament, there being, indeed, no cause for it; for they had all taken the oath of supremacy, to the renouncing of Papal power and jurisdiction, the form of which oath is set down in Fox's "Acts and Monuments." They did also generally receive those few injunctions sent out for reformation, as we shall hear presently. I find, in the first and second Parliaments in King Edward's time, the lords spiritual and temporal sitting and enacting; and John Stow gives us a copy of Stephen Gardiner's letter sent out of the Tower (in the third year of the king, for then he was imprisoned) to the lords of the council, wherein he sues for his liberty, that he might do his duty in Parliament, then sitting, being a member of the same. This plainly shows, the only hinderance of his sitting there was want of liberty, and that he only of all the bishops was kept from thence. That which Master Fox saith in the beginning of his story of King Edward, "that several prisons," is spoken by anticipation, as other things also there insinuated that were after done throughout the following course of the king's reign.

If now it be asked, where is the judgment of a national synod to warrant King Edward's Reformation? I have many things to say. 1. What I speak of the English Reformation, that it was not done without the judgment of a national synod, did chiefly relate to the

synod under King Henry, which, as I said, began the Reformation, and to the synod under Queen Elizabeth, which perfected it. In the first, was the main annoyance and cause of corruption in the Church removed, by casting out the usurped Papal jurisdiction, with some dependencies of it; but in the latter synod the whole work (carried on under King Edward, according to the difficulties and shortness of his reign) was completed, showing itself in an uniform body of doctrine, voted and published in the thirty-nine Articles of this Church.

2. For the work done in King Edward's time, if anything did run out of square through the swelling title of supreme head, stretched a little, perchance, by some, beyond his line, the thanks are first due to those whom they of the Popish party account theirs; I mean those bishops and clergy under Henry VIII. who may seem, at least in words and expression, to have overdone their work; not in that part which they denied to the Pope, for none could have written better against that usurped Papal supremacy than Bishop Gardiner, Tonstal, and others, but in that which they attributed to the king. And, therefore, the Parliament declaring for the Crown in this point of ecclesiastical jurisdiction did relate to the vote and acknowledgment of the clergy ("Seeing that all authority of jurisdiction is derived from the king's highness as supreme head, and so acknowledged by the clergy of this realm: be it therefore enacted," &c. 1 Edw. 6, cap. 2), that if they of the Parliament went too far in their attributions and expressions, we may see whom they followed.

Now, considering what was already granted under Henry VIII., and sworn to again under Edward VI., by the bishops and clergy of this nation; considering also the king, although of admirable piety and understanding beyond his years, yet, being under age, and so under protection, it could be no marvel if the power of those lay persons, who ruled in chief, had thereby the greater influence upon the affairs of the time. And however the king's authority, under pretence of that title and jurisdiction, as it seems, was abused in disposing of Church means and diverting them to private gain, yet I cannot find it to have been abused in this Reformation, as to the point of God's worship and religion itself; but must acknowledge the great and good providence of God in it, that, notwithstanding the difficulties and prejudices of the time, the business of religion was fairly carried on. And that is the third thing I have to say, that the Reformation under King Edward—to the abolishing of image worship, the restoring of the Liturgy in a known tongue, and communion in both kinds, with that which followed thereupon, the abolishing of Romish massings, for herein was the main of King Edward's

Reformation—was warrantably advanced and carried on. For the clearing of which, as to the authority that did it, I have these things to say:—

1. Reformation of God's worship may be warrantably done without a foregoing synodical vote. Synods, indeed, are the most prudential and safe way of determining Church affairs, where there is not just and apparent cause of fearing more danger from the persons which are to be convoked, and the times in which they are to assemble. To this purpose sounds that known complaint of Gregory Nazianzen, "That he saw no good end of councils," which he spoke not absolutely, but with respect to the times and persons as they stood then affected, by reason of the prevailing faction of the Arians, who, by their number and cunning, made advantage often of the councils held in those times. Now seeing the office of bishops and pastors of the Church, as to this point of reformation, is directive, either in or out of synod, and the more convenient way of the two for giving out that direction is by their meeting and consulting in synod, therefore the prince, whose power or office is imperative and co-active for establishing by-laws and penalties what is evidenced to him, hath great reason to receive his direction from the pastors of the Church assembled in synod. But he is not simply and always bound to take his direction thus by any law of God or man; for if by the law of God he stand bound to establish within his own dominions whatsoever is evidenced to him by faithful bishops and learned men of the Church to be the law of Christ (such as were the forementioned points of reformation, apparently consonant to Scripture and primitive antiquity), shall he not perform his known duty, till the vote of a major part of a synod give him leave to do it? The change of religion for the worse is still charged upon the evil kings in the Old Testament, and the reforming it again is recorded to the praise of good kings, which shows this obligation of duty upon every prince; and the examples of Hezekiah and Josiah, who were more forward in the reformation of God's worship than the priests, do warrant the forward piety of our young Josiah, King Edward. And this is also approved by that which many Christian emperors and kings have, to their great praise, done in the business of religion, without or before the calling of a council, though not without the counsel and advice of faithful bishops and learned men. Of this point more below, when to speak of regal supremacy in ecclesiastical things.

Neither can we say the sovereign prince is bound, in the way of prudence, always to receive his direction from a vote in synod, especially when there is just cause of fear, as above said; but

he may have greater reason to take advice from persons free from the exceptions of factious interests, to which the most of them that should meet are apparently obnoxious. And how far this was considerable in the beginning of King Edward's reign, or whether such fear made them forbear to put it at first to a synodical vote, I cannot say; but this I have farther to say—

2. In reformation of religion we must put a difference between provisional injunctions sent out for the public exercise of religion or worship, and the body or comprehension of doctrine or uniformity in points of religion. In order to the latter, a body of doctrine, I find there was a synod held under King Edward. The acts of it I have not seen, but it appears to have provided for doctrinals; for it is spoken of in the convocation held 1 Mariæ, where, in the act of the second day—as Fox in his “Acts and Monuments” hath related—a dispute arises about a catechism published in the name of the synod under King Edward; the Popish party renouncing it, and, on the Protestant part, John Philpot, Archdeacon of Winchester, maintaining it to be synodical, because compiled by authority and commission from the synod; “for (saith he) this house granted authority to make ecclesiastical and spiritual laws unto certain persons, to be appointed by the king's majesty;” and concludes, that the catechism and such laws were truly said to be “done by the synod, since they had (saith he) our synodal authority unto them committed.” Now as all catechisms do, so this did contain the body of doctrine answerable to the articles of reformation, which no doubt were agreed on in that synod, and therefore rejected by the Popish party.

This synod, as I suppose, was not held till the fifth of King Edward: but the injunctions that went out in the first year were provisional, for the public exercise of religion and worship, which was necessarily to be provided for in the present, and went no farther than those evident points above mentioned. Like injunctions we find sent out by Queen Mary in her own name and authority; for having suddenly dissolved the convocation by her peremptory mandate to Bishop Bonner for that purpose, in December, she sent out, the March following, injunctions (not upon any vote of the former convocation) touching Papal supremacy, sacraments, priests' marriage, &c., as we have seen them in Fox's “Acts and Monuments.” If it be said, as usually they reply, that she did but restore what was before established in the Church; so we may say, by the injunctions of King Edward was restored the due worship of God, accordingly as it was established and used in the ancient Church, in a known tongue, with communion in both kinds, without image worship;

all which were ruled cases in the ancient Church. And of those few injunctions we may say farther, for the warrant of them—

3. They were sent out by the king's authority upon the advice of sundry bishops and other learned men of this land, and generally received and put in practice by the bishops, in their several dioceses. Both these things are avouched expressly in the charge given in against Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, extant in Fox's "Acts and Monuments," to show that he was the only bishop that did not so readily conform as the rest did. This also appears by the letters of the Archbishop Crammer to Bonner, Bishop of London, to whom he sent the said injunctions; and by the letters of Bonner to the Bishop of Westminster, who then was Thirlby (twice promoted in King Edward's days), to other bishops, for the execution of the same; which letters are to be seen also in Fox's Acts.

If we look on farther to the Parliament held in the second and third year of the king, we find, in the first chapter, a law for the uniformity of public prayer and administration of the sacraments, expressing thus much: "That for the drawing up such an order and form, the king appointed the Archbishop of Canterbury, and certain of the most learned and discreet bishops, and other learned men of this realm (there is the fitness of the persons for the work), having respect to the pure and sincere Christian religion taught in the Scriptures, and to the usages in the primitive Church (there is the fitness of the rule they went by), the which at this time, by the aid of the Holy Ghost, and with one uniform agreement, is by them concluded. Wherefore the Lords, spiritual (note that) and temporal, and the Commons in this present Parliament assembled, considering the godly travail of the King and the Lord Protector in gathering the said archbishop, and bishops, and learned men together, the godly prayers, orders, and rites, in the said book, and the considerations of altering those things that be altered, and retaining those things which be retained in the said book, and also the honour of God, and the great quietness which is like to ensue upon the same; do give his highness most lowly thanks for the same, and humbly pray it may be enacted," &c. What could be more sweetly begun by the king, carried on by the bishops, received by all the estates, than this work was? Now if there wanted a formal synodical vote, yet was there in effect that which is equivalent to it—the general reception of the thing done; yea, the bishops not only received and put in practice what was commanded, but did actually in Parliament give their consent; there we find them all sitting, and if all did not consent—which is more than any can say—yet the major part by far

did undoubtedly, for they continued, as I observed above, in their places unmolested all King Edward's days. Neither can it make any real difference, as to the justness of a reformation, whether it begin from a vote of bishops in synod, and so proceeding to the sovereign prince, be by him received and established, or take beginning from the piety of the prince, moved by advice of faithful bishops, and so proceeding to the whole body of the clergy or pastors of the Church, be by them generally received and put in practice, according to the command of the sovereign authority. It is true, indeed, that some of the bishops were deprived; but, as I insinuated before, their number was inconsiderable to the other, and their deprivation was not till the end of the king's third year, at soonest, which shows their compliance at first.

Now after all this it will be worth our observing what the Council of Trent some years after, in their canons of Reformation, did confess, and thought fit to redress. "*Multa jam sive temporum vitio, sive hominum incuriâ et improbitate irrepsisse, aliena à tanti sacrificii dignitate;—Many things (say they), either through the iniquity of the times, or through the carelessness and wickedness of men, have crept in, far unmeet for the worthiness of so great a sacrifice.*" And what were those things? "*Quæ avaritia vel superstitio induxit;—Which covetousness or superstition hath brought in.*" Then they give orders for redress, that the ordinary bishops of the place should "*de medio tollere,—take them clean away.*" This was well spoken, had they done it thoroughly.

Now what they thought fit to be done, and did it but slightly, was done fully in the Protestant Reformation, and particularly in that under King Edward; for the shameful nundination of masses, which covetousness had brought in, was clean taken away, by taking away the manner and trade of Romish massings, and reducing the free ministration of the sacrament; and the many abuses which superstition had brought in were removed by restoring the public Liturgy in a known tongue, and the celebration of the communion in both kinds, and by taking clean away the worship of images. And all this was done by the advice and travail of bishops and chief pastors of the Church, under a pious king. What exception, then, can there be? It may, perchance, be said, that, in the close of that decree, this power of reforming is allowed to the bishops of the place, "*ut delegatis sedis apostolicæ,—as to the delegates of the apostolic see:*" yea, there is still the mischief and hinderance of all good reformation in the Christian Church. "*Deus non erit Deus, &c.;—God shall not be God except man please,*" as Tertullian said in his *Apol.*

And truth shall not be truth, except the Pope please ; nor God worshipped after his own will, unless the Pope will too.

To conclude. Lay now the premises together, and see the warrantableness of the Reformation under King Edward, both for the thing done, and the authority by which it was done. The thing done was for the general what the Council of Trent thought fit to be done—the removing of some things, which were crept in by the corruption of the times, by the carelessness and iniquity of men ; things which covetousness and superstition, the two breeders of all Popish abuses, had brought in ; things, for the particular, so evident by Scripture and usage of the primitive Church, the warrantable rule of reformation which they went by, as above noted in the statute of Parliament, that nothing can be more. So for the authority by which this was done. It was begun by a good and gracious king, upon the advice and direction of sundry learned and discreet bishops ; was carried on and managed by divers bishops and other learned men of this realm, as was also said in the forementioned statute, and generally received by all the estates of the land, and accordingly confirmed and established by king and parliament. Such was the condition and warrant of that Reformation, which as no Romanist can justly reprove, so no sectaries can pretend to the like, whether we consider the evidence of the things or abuses reformed, according to Scripture and usages of antiquity, or the authority by which that Reformation was begun, carried on, and managed, and, lastly, confirmed and established ; of all which there is a great failing in the pretended reformation of sectaries ; yea, in that which the Presbyterians undertook, who of all other pretend most to regularity and order.

We are at last come down to Queen Elizabeth's reign, under whom we said the Reformation was perfected. And here we are to enquire, too, of the imprisoning of bishops, and look after a national synod. We acknowledge that divers bishops were imprisoned, and, which is more, deprived too, and justly both, as will appear hereafter upon consideration of their offence. Here we must first note, that there was no design, in the imprisoning or depriving them, to make way for the holding of a synod, nor any necessity was there of it in order to that end ; for if we reckon, that on the one part there were six bishops remaining, to whom the queen's letters for the consecration of Matthew Parker were directed, and many bishoprics actually void at Queen Mary's death, which being supplied, there was no fear that the Popish bishops, who were very suddenly reduced to nine, by death or quitting the land, should make the major

part, had the business of reformation been put at first to a synodical vote.

As for the injunctions sent out before it came to a synod, they were the same for substance with those of King Edward, upon the evidence and warrant, as we heard above. Yet such was her tender care that all “persons doubtful should have satisfaction, and be brought to some good and charitable agreement” (as in her declaration, set down in Stow), that for this very purpose, before anything of religion should be established by Parliament, she appointed a conference to be held publicly at Westminster, between learned persons on both sides. Again, those injunctions were but provisional orders, as I may call them, for the present exercise of religion; the whole doctrine being after concluded and drawn up in a just and lawful synod.

A lawful national synod it was, in and by which whatever belongs to the uniformity of doctrine and religion was defined, drawn up, and published, in thirty-nine Articles. The great difference betwixt this synod and the Presbyterian assembly, however the reproaching Romanists rank them together, will appear upon these considerations:—1. They that took upon them to exclude or remove our bishops had not power either to call a synod, or to deprive a bishop; and that is the first irregularity, viz., usurpation of power. 2. The cause pretended for the removing of our bishops was not any offence against their duty as subjects, or against their office as bishops; but merely for their very office, because they were bishops; and that was purely schismatical. 3. The persons taken in to make up their assembly did not pretend to succeed our bishops, so removed, in their power and office; and so it was a synod clean out of the way of the Church, sitting and concluding by a power taken to themselves; and therefore also plainly schismatical. Every one of these irregularities nulls the lawfulness of an ecclesiastical synod. But none of these can be charged upon us; for the Popish bishops that remained obstinate were removed by due authority, upon just cause, viz., their offence against the duty of subjects and of their own office. Lastly, the places void, either by deprivation of these, or death of others, were supplied by bishops lawfully ordained, who, together with the old bishops remaining after King Edward’s days, and the rest of the clergy of the land, made up a due and lawful ecclesiastical synod.

Having thus far spoken of the care and travail of our kings and queen in this work of reforming religion and God’s worship within this land, it might seem convenient to say something more of the supremacy, or of the power, which, by virtue of their

supremacy, princes have ; and to show how in this business of reformation and Church affairs it may be so bounded that it intrench not upon, or infringe the power and office of the bishops and chief pastors of the Church. But seeing we found the power and office of the one, and the other severed and distinct throughout the reformations spoken of in this chapter—for we found bishops advising and counselling, and the prince commanding, appointing, and convocating them to the work : then, again, bishops, with other learned men, so appointed and convocated, managing the business and concluding what was to be done in it, and the sovereign prince, with Parliament, confirming and giving public establishment to that which was so concluded and agreed upon by them ; we will defer for the present further prosecution of this point.

OF THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE, AND ITS SUFFICIENCY.

BY

RICHARD FIELD, D.D., DEAN OF GLOUCESTER.

Of the Canon of the Scriptures.

THAT the Church did not admit the canon of Scripture which the Romanists now do, nor ever accounted those books canonical which we think to be apocryphal, it will easily appear, in that all the most famous divines, from the beginning of the Christian world, even till the time of Luther, did reject those books as apocryphal that we do. The Church of the Jews (to whom, as St. Paul saith, the oracles of God were committed) admitted but only twenty-two books, as delivered to them from God, to be the canon of their faith, as Josephus witnesseth. Neither did the Christian Church ever admit any more.

Melito, Bishop of Sardis, being desired by Onesimus to send him a catalogue of the books of the Old and New Testaments, writeth thus unto him: "Having diligently sought out the books of the Old Testament, and put them in order, I have sent them unto you; the names whereof are these: the five books of Moses—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; then Jesus the son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, the four books of Kings, the two books of Chronicles, the Psalms of David, the Proverbs (which is also called the Wisdom of Solomon), Ecclesiastes, the Canticles, Job, the Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, one book of the twelve Prophets, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Esdras." Some so translate the words of Melito as if he reckoned the Wisdom of Solomon as a separate book, and so meant the book that is commonly called the Wisdom of Solomon, and is by us accounted to be apocryphal. But Ruffinus translateth as we do: and that we have rightly expressed the meaning of this worthy bishop, and that he only added this as a glorious title to the book of Solomon's Proverbs, which, as

Eusebius saith, the ancients usually called σοφίαν παναρετον, the reader will soon be satisfied, if he peruse that which Dr. Reynolds hath, touching this point, in his prelections. Eusebius sheweth that Josephus, according to the ancient tradition of the Jews, numbered only twenty-two canonical books of the Old Testament, as we do; and in his Chronicle he saith expressly, that the books of the Maccabees are not in the canon.

“Read (saith Cyril of Jerusalem, in his Catechism) the divine Scriptures—that is, the twenty-two books of the Old Testament;” and a little after, “Read, therefore, these twenty-two books, but with the Apocrypha have nothing to do; meditate upon the divine Scriptures, which we confidently read in the Church. The holy apostles, the guides of truth, who delivered unto us these books, were more wise and religious than thou art. Seeing, therefore, thou art but a son, transgress not the precepts of the Fathers. Now these are the books which thou must read;” and then numbereth all the books of the Old Testament, and omitteth all those that are controverted, saving that he addeth that of Baruch, thinking it a part of Jeremiah’s prophecies. Of the same opinion is Epiphanius, making no mention of any of the books rejected by us as apocryphal, but only the book of Wisdom and Jesus the son of Sirach, which, he saith, “are profitable, but not to be esteemed as the twenty-two books (or twenty-seven, as some count them) that were kept in the ark of the covenant;” which are the books by us acknowledged to be canonical.

Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, writing to Seleucus, hath these words: “I will reckon unto thee all the books that proceed from the Holy Ghost; and that thou mayest clearly conceive that which concerns this matter, I will first number unto thee the books of the Old Testament;” and then he nameth the five books of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, Ruth, four books of the Kings, two of the Chronicles, two of Esdras, Job, the Psalms; three of Solomon, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles; twelve prophets, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; the four prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; and concludeth, that to these some add Esther. The reason why some doubted of Esther, I have elsewhere showed, out of Sixtus Senensis, to have been, the apocryphal additions to the book. I have somewhere cited this book as a part of Gregory Nazianzen’s works, because some think it so to be, and put it amongst his works. But Gregory hath delivered his opinion clearly touching this matter, though that book happily be not his. “Be conversant (saith he) day and night in the

divine oracles ; but lest such books as are not of this sort deceive thee (for many erroneous books are inserted), receive the true and just number of books that are divine ;” and then nameth all the books that we admit, save that he omitteth the book of Esther, upon the same reason that I noted out of Sixtus Senensis : and when he hath named these, he addeth those of the New Testament ; and then pronounceth, that whatsoever is not within this number, is to be accounted amongst bastard and counterfeit books.

Origen, expounding the first Psalm, putteth down a catalogue of the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, writing thus in precise words, as Eusebius telleth us : “ We must not be ignorant that the books of the Old Testament, as the Hebrews do deliver, are twenty-two, which is the number of their letters ;” and then nameth all the books admitted by us, and addeth, “ that the books of Maccabees are without this number.” Athanasius agreeth with Origen, writing in this sort : “ All our Scripture, that are Christians, was given by divine inspiration ; neither hath this Scripture infinite books, but a definite number, and contained in a certain canon : and these are the books of the Old Testament—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the first and second of Kings (accounted one book), the third and fourth of Kings (accounted one book), Chronicles, first and second (accounted one book), Esdras, the first and second (one book), the Psalms of David, Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Job ; twelve prophets, contained in one volume—Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi ; and four other prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The books, therefore, of the Old Testament are twenty-two in number, answerable to the Hebrew letters. Beside these there are certain other books of the Old Testament, that are not in the canon, and these are read only to the catechumens or novices.” Amongst these he numbereth the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, Judith, Tobit ; but mentioneth not the books of Maccabees at all. To these he addeth the book of Esther, accounting it apocryphal, being mispersuaded of the whole, by reason of those apocryphal additions ; as before I noted out of Sixtus Senensis. In the conclusion of his Synopsis, he mentioneth, together with the former, four books of Maccabees, and the story of Susannah ; but saith they are in the number of them that are contradicted.

The Council of Laodicea decreeth in this sort : “ Let no books be read in the Church but the books of the Old and New

Testament ;” and then addeth, “ These are the books of the Old Testament that are to be read—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Chronicles, Esdras, the book of the Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Job, Esther, twelve prophets, Hosea, &c., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.” The canons of this council are confirmed by the sixth general council holden in Trullo. To these we may add Damascene, who, having numbered all those books, and those only, as canonical, that we do, addeth, that “ the book of Wisdom, and of Jesus the son of Sirach, are good books, and contain good lessons of virtue ; but that they are not numbered in this account, neither were laid up in the ark.” Leontius advocatus Byzantinus saith there are only twenty-two books of the Old Testament, and reckoneth all those, and those only, that we do. All these worthies that we have hitherto produced to testify in this case are of the Greek Church ; wherefore let us pass to them of the Latin.

Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, saith, “ The law of the Old Testament is contained in twenty-two books, according to the number of the Hebrew letters ; which are so disposed and put in order, according to the tradition of the ancients, that there are five books of Moses, that Joshua is the sixth, the Judges and Ruth the seventh, the first and second of Kings the eighth, the third and fourth the ninth, two of Chronicles the tenth, Esdras the eleventh, Psalms the twelfth ; Solomon’s Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth ; the twelve Prophets the sixteenth ; Isaiah, Jeremiah, with the Lamentations and Epistle, Daniel, Ezekiel, Job, and Esther, do make up the number of twenty-two books. Some have thought good to add Tobit and Judith, and so to make the books to be twenty-four in number, according to the number of the Greek letters.”

Ruffinus, in the explanation of the Creed, which is found amongst the works of Cyprian, and so attributed to him, setteth down a catalogue of those books, which, according to the tradition of the ancients, are believed to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost, and delivered to the Churches of Christ, containing all those books which we admit, excluding all those that are now in question. “ It must be known (saith he) that there are other books, which are not called canonical, but ecclesiastical, by the ancients—as the Wisdom of Solomon, and that of the son of Sirach. And in the same rank we must put the books of Tobias and Judith, and the books of the Maccabees, and in the New Testament the book of Pastor : all which truly they

would have to be read in the Church, but not to be alleged for proof of any matter of faith that was questioned or doubted of;" and then concludeth, that he held it very fit to put down these things, which were delivered by tradition from the Fathers, that they that are to learn the first elements and rudiments of the Christian religion may know out of what fountains to draw.

Jerome, in his Prologue, which he prefixed before the books of the Old Testament, by him translated out of Hebrew into Latin, saith, "There are twenty-two books of the Old Testament; and that as there are but twenty-two Hebrew letters, by which we write whatsoever we speak, so there are twenty-two books, by which, as by letters and beginnings in the doctrines of God, the tender infancy of the just man, that yet is like a child hanging on the breast, is informed and instructed;" and then nameth all the books which we admit, and after addeth, "Whatsoever is beside these, is to be put amongst the Apocrypha; and that therefore the books of Wisdom, of Jesus the son of Sirach, of Judith, Tobias, and Pastor, are not in the canon." And the same Jerome, in his Preface before the books of Solomon, having made mention of the books of Wisdom of Ecclesiasticus, and delivered his opinion, that it is untruly called the Wisdom of Solomon, and attributed to him, then addeth, that "as the Church readeth the books of Judith, Tobias, and the Maccabees, but doth not account them amongst the canonical Scriptures; so these two books may be read for the edification of the people, but not for the confirmation of any doubtful point of doctrine." Sixtus Sinensis confesseth that Philastrius rejecteth the books of Maccabees. And the same Philastrius, in the heresy of the Proodianitæ, taxeth them, amongst other things, that they used the book of Wisdom, which Jesus the son of Sirach wrote long after Solomon's time.

The author of the book "*De Mirabilibus Scripturæ*," that goeth under the name of Augustine, hath these words: "*De lacu verò et Abacuck translato, in Belis Draconisque fabula, idcirco in hoc ordine non ponitur; quod in autoritate divinæ Scripturæ non habentur.*" It is true, that Augustine, and the African bishops of his time, and some other in that age, finding these books, which Jerome and the rest, before cited, reject as apocryphal, to be joined with the other, and together read with them in the Church, seem to account them to be canonical. Cajetan and others answer, that those Fathers speak of the canon of manners, not of faith; and of books, not simply, but in a sort canonical: so that they differ not from the other Fathers before alleged, that deny them to be canonical, as not being simply and absolutely so. How fit and true this answer is I

will not stand to examine; but this is most certain, that Augustine himself seemeth something to lessen the authority of this book: for whereas the example of Razias killing himself is pressed against him, to prove that it is lawful for a man to kill himself. After other answers, he saith, "The Jews do not esteem this Scripture, called the history of Maccabees, in such sort as the law, the prophets, and the Psalms, to which Christ giveth testimony as to them that bear witness of him, saying, It beloveth that all those things should be fulfilled that are written of me in the law, the prophets, and the Psalms. But it is received of the Church not unprofitably, if it be soberly read and heard; especially in respect of those Maccabees, that, as true martyrs, endured grievous and horrible things of the persecutors, for the law of God." And the Council of Carthage, whereat Augustine was present, prescribing that no books should be read in the Church as canonical but such as indeed are canonical, leaveth out the books of Maccabees, as it appeareth by the Greek edition, though they have foisted them into the Latin.

But howsoever these did not so exactly look into these things as they of the Greek Church, and many of the Latin Church before named, but admitted those books as in a sort canonical that they found joined together with the other indubitate Scriptures which they had of the translation of the Septuagint; yet after Jerome had translated them out of the Hebrew, and prefixed his prologues and prefaces before the books translated by him, almost all the bishops and men of account in the Latin or West Church so approved the same, that they admitted no other books as canonical but those that he did.

Pope Gregory I., citing a certain testimony out of the first book of Maccabees, hath these words: "We offend not, if, touching this thing, we allege and produce a testimony out of books, though not canonical, yet published for the edification of the people." This was the opinion of Pope Gregory, Gregory I., Gregory the Great, our apostle, as they of the Romish faction tell us; and therefore it will not be safe for us to leave the faith first delivered unto us. To the pope, I will add certain cardinals.

Bonaventura, in his Preface before his exposition of the Psalter, undertaketh to show which are the books of Scripture. "Scripture (saith he) consisteth of the Old and New Testament, and the whole body of canonical Scripture is contained in these two." Then, passing by the books of the New Testaments, he reckoneth all those, and those only, that Jerome doth, sorting them into their several ranks and orders, as the

Hebrews do. And in another place he saith, “There are four sorts of writings in which a student must be conversant—the books of holy Scripture, the writings of the Fathers, such sayings as have been gathered out of them, and the writings of philosophers. And because in the books of philosophers there is no knowledge to give remission of sins; nor originally in the sums, because they have been extracted out of the originals of the Fathers; nor in them, because they have been taken out of the Scripture; therefore that is principally and in the first place to be studied, and there we must seek that knowledge, as in the fountain.” And then, that all may know which and how many these books of Scripture are that he will have to be thus studied, he saith, “According to Jerome, there are twenty-two in the Old Testament, and in the New there are eight.”

Hugo Cardinalis repeateth certain verses, expressing which books are canonical, and which apocryphal. The verses are these:—

“Quinque libros Moisi, Josue, Judicum, Samuelem,
Et Melachim, tres præcipuos, bis sexque prophetas,
Hebræus reliquis censet præcellere libris.
Quinque vocat legem, reliquos vult esse prophetas.
Post hagiographa sunt, Daniel, David, Esther, et Esdras,
Job, Paralipomenon, et tres libri Solomonis.
Restant Apocrypha, Jesus, Sapientia, Pastor,
Et Maccabæorum libri, Judith, atque Tobias.
Hi, quia sunt dubii, sub canone non numerantur:
Sed quia vera canunt Ecclesia suscipit illos.”

Here he numbereth the books canonical and apocryphal, as we do. And the same Hugo, in “Prologum Galeatum,” speaking of the books rejected by us, saith that “these books are not received by the Church for proof of doctrine, but for information of manners.” And in another place he saith, “They are not counted amongst the canonical.” Cardinal Cajetan saith, “Those books only are to be accounted canonical which Jerome so accounted;” and admitteth none of those that are now questioned. This he wrote at Rome, as himself telleth us, in the year 1532.

From the Church of Rome, which was the principal amongst those of the west, let us proceed to see what other Churches thought of this matter. Thomas Aquinas, proposing the question whether the souls of them that are departed do know what things are done here?—it being objected, that the dead do often appear unto the living, as Samuel appeared unto Saul—concerning Samuel, he answereth, that “it may be said that he appeared by divine revelation, according to that in Ecclesiasticus

xlvi.; or else, if the authority of that book be not admitted, because it is not in the canon of the Hebrews, it may be said that that apparition was procured by the devil."

Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, affirmeth, that "the authority of the six books questioned is not sufficient to prove anything that is in controversy." And that Thomas Secunda Secundæ, and Lyranus, in his Prologue before the book of Tobias, do say, that those books "are not of so great authority that any sufficient proofs may be drawn from them in matters of faith, as from the other books." And therefore pronounceth, he thinketh "they have such authority as the writings of the Fathers approved by the Church." And he mentioneth a certain work, entitled "Catholicon:" the author's name is not known; but the same author, as he telleth us, pronounceth, that none of those books were received for proof of matters of faith, but only for information of manners. By this of Antoninus, who was present at the Council of Florence, it will easily appear to be merely suppositious, that we find, in the abridgment of that council by Caranza, that these books were pronounced to be canonical: for had they been so, neither would he nor others have rejected them after the holding of this council; neither would such a decree have been omitted by all others that put out the councils, at large and abridged.

Radulphus Flaviacensis, in his commentaries upon Leviticus, speaking of books pertaining to the sacred history, hath these words: "The books of Tobias, Judith, and of the Maccabees, though they be read for the edification of the Church, yet have no perfect authority." Beda, after the history of Ezra, addeth, "Thus far the divine Scripture containeth the course of times; what things afterwards we find digested among the Jews, they are taken out of the books of Maccabees, Josephus, and the writings of Africanus." It appeareth by the Epistle of Hilary, Bishop of Arles, that in Massilia, and in some other places of France, there were some that took exception to Augustine alleging a place out of the book of Wisdom—"Raptus est ne malitiâ mutaret intellectum ejus;" and affirmed, that this testimony, as not being canonical, should have been omitted.

Hugo, "De Sancto Victore," having reckoned the twenty-two books of the Old Testament, saith, "There are besides certain other books, as the Wisdom of Solomon, the books of Jesus the son of Sirach, Judith, Tobias, and the books of Maccabees, which are read, but are not written in the canon." These he matcheth in authority with the writings of the Fathers. Richardus, "De Sancto Victore," delivereth his opinion of the

same books in the same sort, and maketh them to be of no greater authority than the writings of the Fathers.

Petrus Cluniacensis Abbas, after an enumeration of all the books that are canonical, saith, "There are yet, besides these authentical books, six other books not to be rejected—Judith, Tobias, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the two books of Maccabees; which, though they attain not to the high dignity of the former, yet they are received of the Church as containing profitable and necessary doctrine." Ockam, to the same purpose, saith, "According to Jerome, in his Prologue before the book of Proverbs, and Gregory, in his Morals, the books of Judith, Tobias, and the Maccabees, Ecclesiasticus, and the book of Wisdom, are not to be received for confirmation of any matter of faith. For Jerome saith, as Gregory also doth, that the Church readeth the books of Judith, Tobias, and the Maccabees, but accounteth them not amongst the canonical Scriptures. So also it readeth those two volumes of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom for the edification of the people, but not for confirmation of points of faith and religion."

Richardus Radulphus, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland, saith, "It is defined in general councils, that there are twenty-two authentical books of the Old Testament." Thomas Waldensis, Provincial of the Carmelites here in England, an enemy to Wickliff, whose works were greatly approved by Pope Martin and the cardinals at that time, hath these words: "The length, breadth, and depth of the city are equal; for as in breath it can enlarge itself no farther than to the love of God and our neighbour, nor in height nor depth than to God the rewarder of all; so in length, which is the Catholic faith, it cannot grow beyond the twelve articles contained in the symbol, and found scattered in some of the twenty-two books; especially seeing the Holy Ghost saith, in the conclusion of all canonical Scripture, 'Let him that will, take of the water of life freely.' I profess unto every one that heareth the words of this prophecy, if any man shall add, God shall add to his plague."

Lyra writeth thus: "Now that I have, by God's help, written upon the canonical books of holy Scripture, beginning at Genesis, and so going on to the end, trusting to the help of the same God, I intend to write upon those other books that are not canonical; such as are the books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobias, and the books of Maccabees;" and addeth, "that it is to be considered that those books which are not canonical are received by the Church, and read in the same, for the information of manners; yet is their authority thought to be

too weak to prove things that are in controversy." And writing upon the first of Esdras, he saith, "that though the books of Tobias, Judith, and the Maccabees be historical books, yet he intendeth to pass them over, because they are not in the canon, neither with the Jews, nor with the Christians." Tostatus, Bishop of Abulen, approveth the judgment of Lyra. Ximenius, that was made a cardinal in the time of Leo X., put forth the Bibles called "*Biblia Complutensia*;" and in the Preface before the same, treating of the books by us thought to be apocryphal, he saith, "they are not in the canon; and that the Church readeth them rather for edification of the people than to confirm any doubtful points of doctrine; and that, therefore, they are not canonical."

Dionysius Carthusianus, in his Prologues before the books of Ecclesiasticus and Tobias, denieth them to be canonical, as also the book of Judith; and writing upon the first chapter of Maccabees, he denieth it to be canonical. Ludovicus Vives, treating of history, sacred and profane: "Now come in (saith he) the books of Kings, and the Chronicles, the apocryphal books of Esther, Tobias, Judith, and Esdras, which being divided into four books, the two first are accounted canonical by the Hebrews, the two latter are apocryphal." And in another place, speaking of the history of Susannah and Bel, he putteth them amongst the Apocrypha. With these accordeth Driedo.

To these may be added the Glosses. The ordinary Gloss was begun by Alcuinus, as Antoninus Florentinus and Gaguinus do think; or by Strabus Fuldensis, as Trithemius and Sixtus Senensis think; but it was afterwards enlarged by divers, which gathered sundry sentences and sayings out of the writings of the Fathers, and put them into it. This Gloss grew to be in great request, and used in all Churches of the West. In the Preface thereof are these words: "There are some books canonical, some not canonical, between which there is as great difference as there is between that which is certain and that which is doubtful; for the canonical books were composed by the immediate direction and suggestion of the Holy Spirit: they that are not canonical are very good and profitable, but their authority is not reputed sufficient to prove the things that are questionable." This the author thinketh so clear, that he fasteneth the note of ignorance upon all such as think otherwise; and professeth, that therefore he held it necessary to prefix this Preface, because there are many who, not giving themselves much to the study of holy Scripture, suppose that all those books that are bound up together in the Bible are to be in like

sort honoured and esteemed; not knowing how to put a difference between books canonical and not canonical, which the Hebrews separate from the canon, and the Greeks account apocryphal, and so sometimes make themselves ridiculous to them that are learned. He citeth the authority of Origen, Jerome, and Ruffinus, rejecting the six books questioned; and though he knew the opinion of Augustine, yet doth he not follow it; only he saith, “that amongst the books not canonical, they that are rejected by Augustine, as Baruch and the third and fourth of Esdras, are less to be esteemed than those that he alloweth.” And immediately after this Preface followeth Jerome’s epistle to Paulinus, and afterwards his Prologus Galeatus, and his Prologue before the books of Solomon. And the Gloss everywhere inculcateth, when it cometh to these six books, that they are not canonical: “Incipit liber Tobiae, &c.;—Here begins the book of Tobias, which is not canonical,” &c. In the edition of the Bibles with the Glosses there is found an exposition of the Prologues of Jerome, written and composed by Brito, more ancient than Lyra; for he is cited by him, and honoured with the title of a famous and worthy man, who professeth that the books questioned are not canonical.

Gratian, in the decree, maketh no mention of the opinion of Gelasius, touching the canonical Scriptures, disliking, as it seemeth, his opinion, and yet not willing to oppose against it. But the Gloss, upon the next distinction, saith, “there are certain apocryphal books that is without author, as the Wisdom of Solomon, the book of Jesus (the son of Sirach, called Ecclesiasticus), the book of Judith, the book of Tobias, and the books of the Maccabees; these books are said to be apocryphal, and yet they are read, but haply not generally.” Driedo citeth this place of the Gloss, and reprehendeth the author of it, as not giving the true reason why these books are called apocryphal, but yet thinketh, as he doth, that they are apocryphal.

Sanctes Pagninus, in his epitome of historical books that are canonical, prefixed before the Bible, translated by him into Latin, accounteth all those that Jerome doth to be canonical, the rest hagiographical. Bruciolus, in the Preface of his Commentaries upon the Bible, translated by him into Italian, saith he hath commented upon all the books of the Old Testament, and yet he hath not commented upon the six books that are questioned.” In the Bibles put out at Antwerp, by Arias Montanus, with the interlineal translation, all those books are omitted. In the edition of the Bible printed at Antwerp by Birkmannus—that very year that the Council of Trent was holden to determine this point, touching the canonical and apocryphal Scriptures,

and the like—the author, suppressing his name, prefixeth a Preface before the same (his) edition, and in it rejecteth all the books now questioned in more peremptory sort than many of the former did.

Here we see a cloud of witnesses, in all ages, and in all parts of the world, witnessing to the truth of that we affirm touching the canon of the Scripture, and rejecting those books as apocryphal, or not canonical, which we reject, even till and after the time of Luther; so that the Church wherein our fathers lived and died is found, as I said, to be in this point a Protestant Church; wherefore let us proceed to other particular points of controversy.

Of the Sufficiency of the Scripture.

THAT the Church formerly did not deny the sufficiency of the Scripture for the direction of Christian men in matters of faith and religion, as the Romanists now do, but acknowledged and taught, that it containeth all things necessary to salvation, accordingly as we now profess, it appeareth by the testimony of these divines. Gregorius Ariminensis, sometimes prior general of the friars Heremites, of the order of St. Augustine, writing upon the sentences, hath these words: “That is properly a theological discourse that consisteth of sayings or propositions contained in the holy Scripture, or of such as are deduced thence, or, at the least, of such as are consequent, and to be deduced from one of these. This (saith he) is proved”—*ex communi omnium conceptione*; *nam omnes arbitrantur tunc solum theologicè aliquid probari, cum ex dictis probatur sacræ Scripturæ*—“out of the common conceit and apprehension of all men; for all men do think that then only a thing is proved theologically when it is proved out of the sayings of holy Scripture; and if we distinguish theological conclusions from principles theological, I affirm, that all those verities that are not formally and in precise words contained in holy Scripture, but are necessarily deduced from things so contained in it, are conclusions theological, whether they be determined by the Church or not;”—for the Church determineth that a proposition is to be believed precisely, because it seeth it is necessarily deduced from the words of holy Scripture—“but no other that is not so deduced is to be accounted a theological conclusion; which is proved out of the sayings of St. Augustine, in his fourteenth book ‘De Trinitate,’ where he saith he doth not conceive, that all that, that may be known by man in human

things, pertaineth to this science, but those things only whereby the most wholesome faith, that leadeth to true happiness, is begotten, nourished, defended, and strengthened; but it is evident, that every such thing is either expressly and in precise terms contained in holy Scripture, or is deduced from things so contained in it; for otherwise the Scripture should not be sufficient to our salvation, and the defence of our faith, which is contrary to St. Augustine, ‘*De Doctrinâ Christianâ*,’ where he saith, ‘*Quicquid homo extra didiceret, si noxium est ibi damnatur, si utile, ibi invenitur*;’ that is, whatsoever a man shall learn without and beside the Scripture, if it be hurtful it is there condemned, if profitable it is there found.” Here we have a pregnant testimony of a man of eminent place and great worth peremptorily resolving for the sufficiency of Scripture, and assuring us, that this was not his private conceit, but the general opinion of all men in his time, and before.

Scotus agreeth with Ariminensis; his words are these: “Whatsoever pertaineth to the heavenly and supernatural knowledge, and is necessary to be known of man in this life, is sufficiently delivered in the sacred Scriptures;” and in another place: “As the theology of those blessed ones that are in heaven hath a certain bound, without and beyond which it extendeth not itself, so also that theological knowledge that we have hath bounds set unto it by the will of God, that revealeth divine and heavenly truth unto us; and the bound prefixed by the will of God, who generally will reveal no more, is within the compass of such things as are found in the holy Scripture; because, as it is in the last of the Revelation, ‘Whosoever shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are added in this book.’”*

Ockam, in his Dialogues, saith, “There is one opinion, that only those verities are to be esteemed Catholic, and such as are necessarily to be believed for the attaining of salvation, which either expressly are delivered in Scripture, or by necessary consequence may be inferred from things so expressed; and that they that follow this opinion allege sundry authorities for proof of the same, as that of Augustine: ‘I have learned to give this honour and reverence only to the books of Scripture, as that I

* “*Sicut theologia beatorum habet terminum, ita et nostra ex voluntate Dei revelantis: terminus autem præfixus à voluntate divinâ, quantum ad revelationem generalem, est eorum quæ sunt in sacrâ Scripturâ: quia sicut habetur apocalyp. ultimo. Qui apposuerit ad hæc, apponet ei Deus plagas quæ apponuntur in libro isto; igitur theologia nostra de facto non est nisi de his quæ continentur in Scripturâ, et de his quæ possunt elici ex ipsis.*”

should believe that none of the authors of them in aught have erred, &c. But others I so read, that, how great soever their sanctity and learning be, I do not therefore think that to be true which they have written because it was their opinion, but because they are able to persuade me, either by some other canonical authors, or by probable reasons, that they have not erred from the truth.* And in another place: ‘Who knows not that the holy canonical Scripture, as well of the Old as the New Testament, is contained within its certain bounds; and that it is preferred before all the books of bishops that have been written since; so that there may be no doubt made, nor dispute raised, concerning it, whether whatsoever is certainly known to be registered in it be true or right: but that the letters of bishops, which either have been or are written since the confirmation of the canon, may be reprehended, if in anything they have strayed from the truth, both by the speech, perchance wiser, of some one better skilled in that matter, and by the more grave authority, and more learned wisdom, of other bishops, and by general councils?’† And Jerome: ‘That which hath not authority and confirmation from the Scriptures is with like facility rejected as it is urged.’‡ Others he sheweth to be of a contrary opinion; but being pressed to give instance of things necessarily believed, and yet not contained in the Scripture, they give no other but certain matters of fact; as, that the apostles composed the symbol called the Apostles’ Creed, that Peter was at Rome, and things of that nature.

But some men will say, we find often mention of traditions in the writers of former ages, so that it seemeth they did not think

* “Ego solus Scripturarum libris didici hunc timorem, honoremque deferre, ut earum nullum auctorum in aliquo errasse firmissimè credam, &c. Alios autem ita lego, ut quantalibet sanctitate, quantave doctrinâ polleant, non ideo verum putem quia ita ipsi senserint, sed quia per alios auctores canonicos, vel probabiles rationes, quod à vero non aberrent, mihi persuadere potuerunt.”

† “Quis nesciat sanctam Scripturam canonicam tam veteris quam novi Testamenti certis terminis suis contineri, eamque posterioribus omnibus episcoporum libris præponi, ut de illâ omninò dubitari et disceptari non possit, utrum verum vel utrum rectum sit quicquid in eâ Scriptum esse constiterit: episcoporum autem literas, quæ post confirmatum canonem; vel Scriptæ sunt, vel scribuntur, et per sermonem fortè sapientiorum eujuslibet in eâ re peritoris, et per aliorum episcoporum graviorum auctoritatem, doctiorumque prudentiam, et per concilia reprehendi licere, si quid in iis fortè à veritate est deviatum?”

‡ “Quod de Scripturis auctoritatem non habet eadem facilitate committitur quâ probatur.”

the Scriptures to contain all things necessary to salvation. For the clearing of this doubt we must observe, that by the name of *tradition* sometimes all the doctrine of Christ and his blessed apostles is meant, that was first delivered by lively voice and afterwards written. Sometimes the delivering of the divine and canonical books from hand to hand, as received from the apostles, is named tradition. Sometimes the sum of Christian religion contained in the Apostles' Creed, which the Church receiveth as a rule of her faith, is named a tradition; but every one of those articles is found in the Scripture, as Waldensis rightly noteth, though not together nor in the same form: so that this collection may rightly be named a tradition, as having been delivered from hand to hand in this form, for the direction of the Church's children, and yet the Scriptures be sufficient. Sometimes by the name of traditions the Fathers understand certain rites and ancient observations; and that the apostles delivered some things in this kind, by word and lively voice, that they wrote not, we easily grant, but which they were it can hardly now be known, as Waldensis rightly noteth: but this proveth not the insufficiency of the Scripture; for none of those Fathers speak of points of doctrine that are to be believed without and besides the Scripture, or that cannot be proved from thence, though sometimes, in a general sort, they name all those points of religion traditions that are not found expressly, and in precise terms, in Scripture, and yet may necessarily be deduced from things there expressed. Lastly, by the name of tradition, is understood the sense and meaning of the Scripture, received from the apostles, and delivered from hand to hand, together with the books.

“There are (saith Cassander) three sorts of traditions; for some concern the doctrine of faith; others, rites and ceremonies; and a third sort, things done. They that concern rites and ceremonies are variable, according to the different circumstances of times; they that are historical are for the most part uncertain, and are not necessary to salvation; they that are dogmatical are certain and perpetual; but by dogmatical traditions we understand, not any divine verity not written, or any point of doctrine not contained in the Scripture, but such points of doctrine, as, though they are not found in precise terms in holy Scripture, yet are deduced from the same, rightly understood and interpreted, as the apostles did understand and expound them to their hearers, and they to such as came after them: so that this tradition is nothing else but the explication and interpretation of the Scripture; and therefore it may be said, not unfitly, that ‘the Scripture is a kind of tradition involved and

sealed up; and that tradition is Scripture unfolded, explained, and opened.'"* This is that which Vincentius Lyrinensis long since delivered—to wit, that the Scripture is sufficient, and containeth all things necessary to be known of a Christian man for the attaining of salvation; but that for the avoiding of the manifold turnings of heretics, perverting the same to their own perdition, we must carefully look to the tradition of the Church, delivering unto us the true sense and meaning of it. By this which hath been said it appeareth, that the Church wherein our fathers lived and died was, in this point touching the sufficiency of the Scripture, an orthodox and true Protestant Church, as it was in the former, touching the canon of the Scripture.

NOTES.

THE contrast between the "Nonconformists" and the modern Dissenters is well exemplified by a late writer thus:—

Who were the Nonconformists?

This is a question which, in this age of education, ought not to require an answer. But unfortunately the education so much boasted of is little more than a varnish on the surface; and thousands who talk about the "Nonconformists," and their "principles," know nothing, or next to nothing, about them.

The fathers of nonconformity were two thousand ministers of the Church of England, who were ejected from her pale on account of their refusal to conform to certain regulations which they deemed unauthorized by Scripture. These excellent and highly conscientious men—piety and zeal were equally unimpeachable—were as unlike modern Dissenters as possible. Far from "dissenting on principle" from an Established Church, or manifesting towards it the virulent and unchristian spirit which characterizes the political dissent of the present day, the Nonconformists were sincerely attached to the Church and its services, and left it unwillingly. This is proved by their conduct after their ejection. It is recorded of one of the most eminent among them (Philip Henry) that though, at the earnest entreaty of part of his flock, he continued to act as their minister after he was deprived of his living, he attended constantly at the parish church, with his little congregation, to whom he preached at home afterwards. No bitterness, no malice, no opposition to the authorities, distinguished those Nonconformists—no clamour against church-rates—no denun-

* "Scripturam esse implicatam quandam et obsignatam traditionem, traditionem vero esse Scripturam explicatam et resignatam."

ciations against the Established Church: but quiet, meek, loyal submission, and reluctant separation.

What are the principles of nonconformity?

These we may glean from the following extracts from the recorded opinions of the Nonconformists:—

Dr. John Owen, in a sermon before the Parliament, said—"Some think you ought not, as rulers of the nation, to put forth your power for the interest of Christ. The good Lord keep your hearts from that apprehension. If it comes to this, that you shall say you have nothing to do with religion as rulers of the nation, God will quickly manifest that he has nothing to do with you, as rulers of the nation."

Dr. Doddridge, Nonconformist minister.—"If no coercive power were admitted, it is probable that covetousness would drive many into dissenting parties, in order to save their tithes or their possessions. So that none can reasonably blame a Government for requiring such general contributions."

Dr. Isaac Watts, another eminent Nonconformist divine, says, in his "Civil Power in Things Sacred"—"I do not vindicate the refusal of tithes and dues to the Church in our nation, for they are to be considered as a civil or national tax or incumbrance on every piece of land or house bought or rented, and so appointed by our laws; and therefore every man knowingly buys or hires his land or house with this incumbrance fixed upon it."

Matthew Henry (son of Philip Henry), acknowledged to be one of the most distinguished of the Nonconformist divines, in his admirable commentary on the Scriptures, thus remarks on the miracle which Jesus Christ wrought to pay the tribute-money:—"The tribute demanded was not any civil payment to the Roman powers—that was strictly exacted by the publicans; but the Church-duties, the half-shekel, about fifteen-pence,* which was required from every person for the service of the temple, and the defraying of the expenses of the worship there. The temple was now made a den of thieves, and the temple worship a pretence for the opposition which the chief priests gave to Christ and his doctrine; and yet Christ paid this tribute. Note:—Church-duties, legally imposed, are to be paid, notwithstanding Church corruptions. We must take heed of using our liberty as a cloak of covetousness, or maliciousness. If Christ pay tribute, who can pretend an exemption?"

I subjoin some further specimens of the "principles of nonconformity," which, though they do not directly bear on the question of compulsory payments, may prove useful, as showing the feelings with which the Nonconformists in other days regarded the Church, and their opinions respecting "Church and State."

Baxter, a Nonconformist.—"The State cannot stand secure without the Church, nor the Church without unity. We highly value the Thirty-nine Articles, as sound and moderate. I would awaken your jealousy to a very careful observance of the Infidels and Papists. Should they infest our vitals, or get into the saddle, where are we?"

* About five times as much as the modern Church-rates.

John Howe, a Nonconformist.—“Thanks be to God, we are not so stupid as not to understand that we are under stricter and much more sacred obligations than can be carried under a name, to adhere to our reverend fathers and brethren of the Established Church, who are most united among themselves in duty to God and our Redeemer, in loyalty to our sovereign, and in fidelity to the Protestant religion.”

Matthew Henry, in commenting on the text, “Go and teach all nations,” &c., says—“Now this plainly signifies it to be the will of Christ, that Christianity should be twisted in with national constitutions.” Again—“Let us give God praise for the national establishment of our religion.”

Dr. Adam Clarke.—“I have not hesitated to show to my people that the Bible is in perfect accordance with the principles of the British Constitution, and the doctrines of the Established Church; to manifest to men of these and future generations the absolute necessity of holding fast that ‘form of sound words’ which distinguishes our National Church, and of ever connecting the fear of God with honour to the king.”

Rowland Hill.—“The public liturgy of the Established Church is a public blessing to the nation.”

W. Bramwell, Wesleyan minister.—“I esteem the Church of England, because her liturgy is the most scriptural form of prayer of human composition in the world.”

John Wesley.—“They who are enemies to the Church, are enemies to me.”

Similar quotations might be given, at much greater length than would be convenient, but the above are quite sufficient to prove that the Nonconformists, and their successors, the acknowledged chiefs of dissenting divinity, held opinions totally at variance with the Church-destroying Dissenters of the present day. As Mr. Coleridge remarked, “Is it not extraordinary to see the Dissenters calling themselves the successors of the old Nonconformists, and yet clamouring for a divorce of Church and State? Why, Baxter, and the other great leaders, would have thought a man an Atheist who had proposed such a thing. They were rather for merging the State into the Church. But these, our modern gentlemen, who are blinded by political passions, give the kiss of alliance to Rome, and walk arm in arm with those who deny the God that redeemed them, if so they may but wreak their antipathies on the National Church.” I by no means agree with Coleridge, if he means to impute to the Dissenters any approbation of Popish doctrines; but their political union with Papists, for one common object, renders them, I grieve to say, but too justly open to his pungent rebuke.—*From a pamphlet published in 1837.*

The Apostles’ Creed leads on to the Nicene; the Nicene to the Athanasian; the Athanasian to the full testimony of the Reformation in our Thirty-nine Articles. Our own Church combines and concentrates this growing truth in our established formularies, in which, however others who have assumed superior attachment to Church principles may discover discord, blessed be God, there is a growing and strength-

ening concurrence of consent, as to their full harmony with all God's truth, among the faithful ministers of the Church of Christ.—*Bickersteth*.

THE HELP OF HUMAN TEACHING.

We are ministers of the Church of England. Our Church, to God alone be glory, our enemies themselves being the judges, is the grand bulwark of the Reformation. The Papists, in their vain boasting, call it "the almost sole surviving coherent body of Protestantism." Under this our good Mother Church—I am not ashamed of the scriptural term, believing fully our Church to be a part of that "Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all"—we have received large, full, and most scriptural instruction in that truth which was handed down to us from the apostolic age, recovered from the corruptions of Popery, displayed at large in our authorized documents, sealed afresh with the blood of martyrs, and, with a comprehensive wisdom and largeness of heart to all who differ from us, but love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, was most providentially and nationally rescued from imminent danger and secured to us at the Revolution of 1688. .

Do we, then, set up tradition in the place of the word of God, or unduly magnify it as necessary to complete the sufficiency of Scripture? By no means. In true tradition there is indeed great benefit; but in false tradition there is immense injury. Truth, if truth, is not less precious when it is orally conveyed or learned from uninspired man. Tradition is not of itself evil, but only the tradition of error. But here is the danger, lest, under the name of tradition, and not knowing of whom we learn, we should receive falsehood as truth.

The controversies now afloat lead me to think it to be important to endeavour to place this subject more distinctly before you.

The benefit of the oral transmission of truth is great. The Gospel was first spread by the foolishness of preaching, and has since continued its glorious course, going "forth conquering and to conquer" by this means. It was some time before the great truths proclaimed were reduced to writing. God ordains living instruments to be his chosen vessels of mercy, to convey mercy to their fellow men; and the living voice, and feeling, and energy of a soul truly converted to God is his appointed means of spreading his truth.—*Bickersteth*.

THE REAL SUFFICIENCY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation."

In the midst of all the danger of self-deception, and of all the errors of human teaching, and all the evil men and seducers, who wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; in the midst of these perils of the last days, there is one pure and holy light. It was the glory of the Reformation to give it to the Church in the vernacular language, as an open book to be read by all. It is a clear, plain, and infallible teacher; not darkness, but light; not mixed with error, but unmingled truth; not unintelligible doctrines, but truth to be preached to the

poor, and to be understood by them; a sure, perfect guide, using "great plainness of speech," for every simple-minded Christian. God himself, speaking as the wisdom of his people, says, "All the words of my mouth are in righteousness, there is nothing forward (intricate) or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge."

Let us consider, then, those properties which mark the sufficiency of the Scripture.

It is the great fountain head of saving truth. Nothing is of any value, as a doctrine for our salvation, but what is taken from the inspired volume. God gives men varied gifts and capacities for drawing from this fountain; but unless it can be shown to be drawn from the fountain, it is of no worth as a divine doctrine. Scribes well instructed to the kingdom of heaven will bring from this treasure things new and old; but whether it be new, or whether it be old, it is worthless if it be not taken from this divine treasure. Here is God's own appointed and freely opened well-head of life, from which flow all the living streams that water, and refresh, and fructify the whole earth.

It is the grand test of true or false doctrine or teaching. Nothing can be plainer than the testimony of the Church of England here: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor proved thereby, is not to be required by any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary for salvation." Though the primitive Church applied the term *rule of faith* to the early creeds, it was only because they viewed them as drawn distinctly from the Scriptures; all the articles being expressly contained in Scripture. Our Church, in maintaining those creeds, takes care to make this clear, by stating, that "they ought to be received, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture." To make the Fathers, or any human writers, instead of the word of God, the test of sound doctrine, is to lean upon an arm of flesh instead of trusting in the Lord, and to magnify man's word above God's word. There is infinitely more danger of our being misled by mere human words, however ancient and venerable, than by God's word, which is altogether pure, and, for the most part, far more clear to the poor and unlearned than any human writings."

The holy Scriptures are also *the privilege and birthright of every Christian*. They were possessed by Timothy long before he was ordained to the ministry, and even though he was the child of a Greek. Let the Papacy put restrictions on their use; keep them from the people, or multiply difficulties in the way of their being read: but it is and shall be the glory of Protestantism to give to all the clear and full exhibition of Christ and his word. In that passage of Revelation which foretells the Reformation, Christ is represented as appearing as an angel from heaven with the open book in his hand. The progress of the Reformation is again represented under the character of "an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." And thanks be unto our God that he is so at this time using our country. Most remarkably was England blessed

among the nations with the full light of the Reformation, and then had given to it a prominent greatness and glory on the earth, in order to convey this glorious privilege and birthright to every part of the world. The Lord prosper all such efforts, and give us willing and glad hearts to join in them with our respective flocks and parishes. It is a daring insult to God to withhold his word from any one who would gladly receive it, whether Greek or Jew, barbarian, Seythian, bond, or free. It is an unspeakable privilege to be honoured of God, both in the national power and the disposition, in some degree, to "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life."

The holy Scriptures are *the true guide of all Christian education*. Let our text solve all questions on this head. Timothy from a child knew the holy Scriptures; and so Timothy, under a careful education from pious ancestors, grew up to be that devoted and faithful servant of God, who was counted as a son and a brother, and a like-minded work-fellow, by the Apostle Paul himself. It is the glory of education in the Church of England, that in our national schools the Bible is the governing book. It is the glory of our Universities, that they are fountains for diffusing the Scriptures. We dare not join in any modern systems of education, like those pursued in our sister country of Ireland, which would mutilate or withhold the sacred volume, or alter and deteriorate that noble translation which our Church has given to our country in the authorized version.

But it is not merely in these views that we see the real sufficiency of the holy Scripture; one more important truth must be added.

The Bible is *the inexhaustible treasury of the faithful minister*. Here is his peculiar and increasing study, from which he is continually receiving fresh riches of light and knowledge. The apostle speaks very plainly, in the words following my text, of the divine and unequalled fulness and glory of this treasury: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." With a solemn allusion to the return of our Lord, and the future judgment then to take place, he powerfully then exhorts Timothy, "preach the word." It contains everything to perfect the man of God. The more we search the holy book, the more we find the mine of divine truth exhaustless: the richest one is that which is discovered and attained, after the most lengthened, prayerful, and patient research; pondering over and considering with closest thought each part of the expressions of the Divine Spirit. Let us compare one part with another, not only in its immediate connexion, but in the general scope of each book and of the whole sacred volume; we shall find it one great whole, given by inspiration of God, and each word in the original is the word of the Holy Ghost—not the mind of individual writers, and thence of private interpretation; but having only one author, the Eternal Spirit, and one mind, the mind of the Infinite One that inhabits eternity, running through the whole.—*Bickersteth's Visitation Sermon*. 1841.

PREFACE.

THE last Tract was devoted to the development of a fact upon which nearly all Christians are agreed, viz., that there is such a thing as “a Church,” and that she has the power of admitting and expelling—in other words, of excommunication. From these premises we deduced, that the Church in question must be a *visible* Church, and therefore composed of evil men as well as good ; and we proved, from the universal prevalence of creeds, articles, agreements, confessions and declarations of faith, &c., that what is called “the right of private judgment” is a civil, and not a religious right. Up to this point, then, as we merely claim for the Church (in the abstract) those powers which the Scripture most certainly asserts for her, we scarcely touch upon any point in dispute ; more especially, indeed, as the importance of Church membership is allowed by all Christians to vary nearly the same extent.

All that we have done has been to prepare the ground for future questions, to clear away certain preliminary difficulties, and to ascertain clearly what it is which remains to be established.

The next step, however, brings us into the regions of polemics ; for the question which now meets us is one of practice ; and having granted that we owe allegiance to the Church, we have to ascertain “which Church, or what Church.” There are probably a thousand bodies, each claiming to be “Christ’s pure and undefiled Church ;” and though our decision must necessarily plunge us into contest with nine hundred and ninety-nine of these bodies, yet we may agree, on certain broad principles, with the whole of them. And it is not at once that the points of dissension present themselves. St. Peter, speaking of St. Paul’s writings, says that they contain “things hard to be

understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable do wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." Here, then, we are expressly told, that private judgment, without learning and stability, may make the very word of life into an engine of destruction. Let the facts of our own day speak. One man denies the divinity of the Saviour, and the depravity of his own nature; rejects the narrative of the fall as a fable, and a large portion of the New Testament history as an allegory: he cuts off from the canon of Scripture any book or part of a book which militates against his preconceived notions; and yet if he be asked where he obtains his authority for what he does profess to believe, he points to the inspired oracles, and tells you that, *rationaly understood*, they teach the doctrines, or rather no-doctrines, that he holds. Another, not satisfied with the atonement of Christ, will have other mediators by hundreds; he will pay absolute worship to the Virgin Mary, and rely not on the righteousness of the Saviour, but on works of supererogation done for him by saints, embodied and disembodied: and he, too, though not permitted to examine for himself, will yet assure you, on the faith of his spiritual guides, that all his dogmas are the revelations of divine truth. Now it cannot for a moment be supposed, that God gave so ambiguous a revelation as a guide to doctrine, and a rule of life; yet we are reduced either to believe this, or one of two alternatives: the first is, that the Scripture is in all points so plain and easy, that all honest men, with the usual portion of common sense, must agree in their interpretation; and the second, that there is some divinely authorized standard to which all variations are to be brought, and by which they are to be adjusted. The former of these two alternatives is in itself contradicted by St. Peter, in the words which we have already quoted; and it involves besides the disagreeable necessity of reducing nearly all theologians to the rank of dishonest disputants. We have no choice, therefore, left us, and are reduced to the conclusion, that there is an authorized standard of interpretation by which we may test our private judgment of the Bible. We shall, perhaps, have scarcely a dissenting voice, if, again speaking in the abstract, we pronounce *the Church* to be that authorized interpreter

of Scripture ; but a mere abstraction will not give a definite judgment upon a particular passage, and we must therefore find a Church *in the concrete* to which we may make our appeal. The safest mode, and, indeed, the only safe mode of proceeding in a case like this, where so much depends upon a right decision, will be to advert to the practice of the apostolic age. Very early were heresies introduced ; and St. Paul emphatically declared, that “if any man, yea, or an angel from heaven, preach unto you any other gospel than that ye have received, let him be anathema.” Now in our day, when the point in dispute may be perhaps the meaning of St. Paul himself, it is evident that the best witnesses we can obtain must be those who were themselves personally instructed by the apostles—who lived in habits of intimacy with them, and were doubtless in the continual practice of bringing their theological doubts to be solved by the wisdom of inspiration. It fortunately happens that we possess witnesses of this character ; and in the works, therefore, of the Roman Clement, of Polycarp, and in a scarcely less degree in those of Ignatius, we have precisely the kind of evidence required, both as to doctrine and discipline. If we go on a little further, we shall find, that during the three first centuries of the Christian Church, though many errors crept in, yet, among the *majority*, a wonderful uniformity was preserved ; and the first four general councils are marked in an especial manner with the tokens of that uniformity. Here, then, we have a distinct age to which we may, on account of its general purity, apply the term apostolic ; and to the doctrines and discipline of which we may with safety assimilate our own. But we have need not of mere safety, or of mere permission, but of absolute command. This command, then, seems to be conveyed in the words quoted about any other gospel. We have now, therefore, advanced another step. A standard of doctrine is found in the Bible, and of interpretation as well as discipline in the primitive Christian Church ; to this standard the various and varying bodies, all claiming to be the Church of Christ, are to be brought, and, by their agreement with it, to be accepted or rejected.

It is quite true, that in the application of this rule there are many difficulties, and before making use of it at all we must

ascertain what are the *essential* parts of the system ; and therefore of perpetual obligation, and what are the mere accidents of the age, the climate, and the country. We cannot expect that a Christian Church, in our day and this land, could in *all* respects be modelled after the form of that established by the apostles at Jerusalem. The practice of reclining at meals, which was not departed from at the celebration of the eucharist, would, though strictly apostolic in itself, have a very irreverend and injurious effect in a modern Church ; and it becomes, therefore, necessary to accommodate to one age and climate that which was obviously intended for another. The washing the feet one of another, the anointing with oil in the name of the Lord, and many other apostolic injunctions, are to be viewed in the same light ; and the elimination of these ceremonies and usages, by withdrawing all that is peculiar to one age, to one country, to one people, leaves, as a residue, that which is applicable to *all ages—to all countries—to all people* ; in a word, it brings us to the noted canon of Vincentius Lirinensis : “ Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.” The working out of this canon will be found perfectly safe ; where tradition steps in, if strictly in accordance therewith, there has at no time been any hesitation in admitting her decisions, and that on matters of vital moment, even though Scripture be totally silent on the subject. Let us take two instances. We baptize infants, and we administer the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to women ; yet for neither of these practices is there any scriptural authority that will bear investigation. They were, however, practices of the early Christian Church ; they prevailed even in the apostolic ages, and therefore must have had apostolic authority. Here, then, we are guided by the rule of Vincent : we find the practices in question adopted in all ages, in all places, by all Christians, and we unhesitatingly obey the commands of the Church, and believe that the customs, though to us resting only on tradition, are, in fact, divine ordinances. Let us, then, bearing this rule in mind, ascertain what parts of the apostolic discipline are capable of universal application. The first thing which strikes us, is the triplicate form of Church government, under bishops, priests, and deacons ; and while we allow, that in many respects the bishop or over-

seer, and the priest or elder, were alike in office, yet we find one peculiarity strongly insisted on, viz., the confining the power of ordination to the former. We find the regular use of set forms of prayer—the admission of infants, by baptism, into the pale of the visible Church—the periodical administration of the eucharist to both sexes—the use of symbols or creeds—and the practice of excommunicating all such as “walked not orderly:” all these are capable of universal adoption; and we have, therefore, a right to expect that any Church, professing to be apostolic in its doctrine and discipline, should give proof of its apostolicity, by a compliance with these requirements. We might go on to enumerate diocesan episcopacy—Timothy and Titus being our examples of the consecration of churches, the catechizing of children; but we are the less under any necessity to do this, as the Tract which we subjoin is calculated to fix the marks of the true Church to the satisfaction of the reader. In the previous Tract we gave an extract from the writings of Dr. Field, and need not, in the present instance, speak of the author. The object of that Tract was to prove and settle the canon of Scripture; and this, as a preliminary, is highly necessary, because not a few points of dispute, respecting ecclesiastical discipline, have been attempted to be solved by a reference to the apocryphal books. When, therefore, the canon of Scripture is settled, it follows both that *all* which be proved from it is of divine authority—and thus, on the one hand, we get rid of the Socinian objections; and that what is *not* admitted into it *cannot* be made the grounds of argument on points either of doctrine or discipline—thus, on the other hand, we are freed from many points of attack to which the Greek and Roman Churches are open.

Before closing this Preface we must say a few words on the second Tract selected for this Part. The marks of the Church being once ascertained, it becomes our duty to bring the pretensions of that communion of which we form a part to the test; and in order to do this we must carefully examine the condition of the Church in the apostolic era, and then, eliminating, as we have shown, the circumstances which apply only to a particular age, climate, and people, institute a comparison

between what remains and our own ecclesiastical regimen. This is the object of the second Tract, and the name of Archbishop Potter will be sufficient to prove its value.

The remarks of Dr. Field on the apostolical succession here require some notice. The subject will be fully investigated in our next Part, and here we must only observe, that he speaks of it as “a note of the Church,” and shows that *by itself* it is not *sufficient*. He establishes no theory of his own, but contents himself by overthrowing that of the Papists. We shall show in another place that the succession, as spoken of by Stapleton, *is* necessary, though, as Dr. Field well observes, not sufficient.

C.

CAMBRIDGE,

The Feast of the Transfiguration.

THE NOTES OF THE CHURCH.

BY

RICHARD FIELD, D.D., DEAN OF GLOUCESTER.

Of the nature of Notes of Difference, and their several kinds.

Now it remaineth that we come to the second part of our principal and general division, to find out the notes whereby the true Church may be known and discerned from all other companies and societies of men in the world. A note, mark, or character, is that whereby one thing may be known and differed from another. The philosophers observe, that of things not the same there are two sorts—some wholly diverse, which have no common condition of nature wherein they agree and are the same. These cannot be apprehended by us, but the diversity of nature and condition found in them must of necessity be conceived and known likewise: so that no man, having any apprehension of the nature of a voice or sound, enquireth wherein it differeth from a circle or line, not finding anything wherein they are the same. These need not any notes, or marks of difference, whereby to be known one from another.

Other things there are which have many things in common wherein they agree and are the same, and some other which are so found in one of them that are not in another. These are not properly said to be wholly diverse, as the former, having many things in common wherein they agree and are the same; but to differ one from another, in that something is so found in one of them that it is not in another. The distinction of these things thus differing cannot be known by any other means, but by observing what is peculiarly found in each of them: neither is there anything proper or peculiar to any of them which may not serve for a note or mark of distinction, to discern one of them from another.

That which is proper to a thing, and peculiarly found in it alone, is of two sorts: for either it is said to be proper and peculiar respectively, and at some one time only; or absolutely, and ever. Respectively, that is proper to a thing, which,

though it be not found in it alone, but in sundry other, yet if we take a view of it, and only some certain and definite things besides, is so in it that is in none of them, and serveth for a sufficient note of distinction to know it from any of them. So if we seek the difference, and discern the nature of man only from those things that are void of life, sense and motion serve for notes of difference and distinction, and are proper to man, for that they are not found in anything void of life. But if we seek the difference in the nature of man from all other things whatsoever, we must find out that which is in man, and in nothing else; in which sort also a thing may be proper and peculiar at some one time, that is not perpetually and ever so, as weeping, laughing, and the like, which, though not always found in a man (for sometimes he neither weepeth nor laugheth), yet, when they are, they be notes of difference, distinguishing man from all other things, for that nothing else is at any time capable of any of these.

Perpetually and absolutely, that is proper to a thing which is inseparable and incommunicable, as never being absent in that to which it is proper, nor ever being found in anything else. Those things which are thus and in this sort proper to a thing, either are of the essence of that to which they are proper, or *that* is of the essence of them: by both these a thing may be known from all other whatsoever, but more especially by them that are of the essence of that which we desire to know. These things thus generally observed touching the nature of the notes of difference whereby one thing may be discerned and known from another, if we apply particularly to the Church, we shall easily know which are the true, certain, and infallible notes thereof, about which our adversaries so tediously contend and jangle, delivering them confusedly without order, and doubtfully without all certainty.

Wherefore, seeing, by that we have already observed, it is evident that there is nothing *not proper* that may, nor *proper* that may not, serve as a note of difference to distinguish one thing from another; seeing likewise of things proper and peculiar there are two sorts, some respectively and some absolutely; and of these again some not perpetually, but at some one time only, and some perpetually and ever; and these either essential to that to which they are peculiar, or essentially depending of it and flowing from it: let us first see what things are proper to the Church, respectively considered; and, secondly, what (without such respective consideration) absolutely, generally, and perpetually; which only are perfect notes of difference whereby the true Church may be perpetually and infallibly known from

all other societies of men, professions of religion, and diversities of divine worship that are in the world; and, thirdly, such as are generally and absolutely, but not perpetually proper.

Of the divers kinds of Notes whereby the true Church is discerned from other societies of men in the world.

THERE are presently, and were formerly, but three main differences of religion in the world, Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity. Paganism is, and was, that state of religion and divine worship wherein men, having no other light than that of nature and the uncertain traditions of their erring fathers to guide them, did and “do change the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.” Judaism is that state of religion wherein men embrace the law which God gave to the children of Abraham and sons of Jacob, reforming heathenish impiety, teaching salvation to be looked for through one, whom God would send in the last days, and exalt to be Lord over all. Christianity is the religion of them that believe Jesus Christ to be that Saviour promised to the Jews, “and acknowledge him to be the Son of the living God.” They which hold this profession are called the Church of Christ; neither is there any other society or company of men in the world that profess so to believe, but they only.

If we take a view of this Church, respectively considered, seeking only the difference which distinguishes it from the society of Pagan infidels, the profession of divine, supernatural, and revealed verities is so found in the Church, that is not amongst any of these; and so, *πρὸς ἕτερον*, respectively, it is proper to the Church, and may serve as a note of difference, distinguishing it from these profane and heathenish companies: but from the Jews it doth not sever it, for it is common to it with them, both holding the sacred profession of many heavenly and revealed verities. So that, if we will distinguish Christians from Jews, we must find out that which is so proper and peculiar to the companies and societies of Christians, that it is not communicated to the Jews. Such is the profession of divine verities revealed in Christ, whom only these societies acknowledge to be the Son of God and Saviour of the world. But for that, when neither heathenish superstition nor the Jews’ perfidious impiety could any longer prevail, or resist against the knowledge and glory of Christ, but that all “the whole world went after him,”

Satan, the enemy of mankind, stirred up certain turbulent, wicked, and godless men, who, professing themselves to be Christians, under the name of Christ brought in damnable doctrines of error, no less dangerously erring than did the Pagans and Jews. This profession of the faith of Christ, though it distinguish the Christian Church from the Jews and Pagans, and is so far proper unto it that it is not found in any of them, yet doth it not separate the multitude of right believing Christians (which is the sound part of the Christian Church, and is named the orthodox Church) from seducing miscreants, being common to both.

We must, therefore, further seek out that which is so peculiarly found in the more special number of right believing Christians that is not in any other, though shadowed under the general name of Christianity. Such is the entire profession of divine verities, according to the rule of faith left by Christ and his first disciples and scholars, the holy apostles.

This entire profession of the truth revealed in Christ, though it distinguish right believers from heretics, yet it is not proper to the happy number and blessed company of Catholic Christians; because schismatics may, and sometimes do, hold an entire profession of the truth of God revealed in Christ. It remaineth, therefore, that we seek out those things that are so peculiarly found in the companies of right believing and Catholic Christians, that they may serve as notes of difference to distinguish them from all, both Pagans, Jews, heretics, and schismatics. These are of two sorts; for either they are such as only sometimes and not perpetually, or such as do perpetually and ever sever the true Church from all conventicles of erring and seducing miscreants. Of the former sort was multitude, largeness of extent, and the name of Catholic, esteemed a note of the Church, in the time of the Fathers. The notes of the latter sort, that are inseparable, perpetual, and absolutely proper and peculiar, which perpetually distinguish the true Catholic Church from all other societies of men and professions of religions in the world, are three: first, the entire profession of those supernatural verities which God hath revealed in Christ his Son; secondly, the use of such holy ceremonies and sacraments as he hath instituted and appointed, to serve as provocations to godliness, preservations from sin, memorials of the benefits of Christ, warrants for the greater security of our believe, and marks of distinction to separate his own from strangers; thirdly, an union or connexion of men in this profession and use of these sacraments, under lawful pastors and guides, appointed, authorized, and sanctified to direct and lead them in the happy ways

of eternal salvation. That these are notes of the Church, it will easily appear, by consideration of all those conditions that are required in the nature of notes. They are inseparable, they are proper, and they are essential, and such things as give being to the Church; and therefore are in nature more clear and evident, and such as that from them the perfect knowledge of the Church may and must be derived. Notwithstanding, for that our adversaries take exception to them, I will first examine their objections; and, secondly, prove that neither they, nor any other that know what they write or speak, can or do assign any other. And because Bellarmine and Stapleton have taken most pains in this argument, I will therefore propose the objections I find in them, assuring myself that there are not any other of moment to be found in the writings of any other of that side.

Of Bellarmine's reasons against the Notes of the Church assigned by us.

BELLARMINE'S first objection is—"By these notes we know not who are elect; therefore by these we do not certainly know which is the true Church." The consequence of this reason we deny, as being most fond and false. He proveth it in this sort—"The Church, according to the doctrine of the Protestants, is only the number of the elect; and therefore if the elect be not known and discerned by these, from the reprobate and castaways, the Church cannot be known by them." But the antecedent of this argument is likewise false, as appeareth by that which I have formerly delivered, touching the nature and being of the Church: for we do not say that the Church consisteth only of the elect, but principally, intentionally, and finally. For otherwise it consisteth of all that partake in the outward calling of grace, and enjoying of the means of salvation, and so may be known by these notes: for that society doubtless hath and enjoyeth the means of salvation, to which the notes above specified do agree.

Secondly, he reasoneth thus—"The true and certain notes whereby the Church is known are inseparable; but there may be true Churches that hold not the entire and sincere profession of supernatural truths revealed in Christ: therefore this profession is no note of the Church. That there may be true Churches without the entire and sincere profession of the truth of God, appeareth by the examples of the Churches of Corinth, Galatia, and other, to whom Paul wrote, and gave them the titles and names of the Churches of God, and yet they erred in

the matter of the resurrection, and the necessity of the law of Moses to be joined with the Gospel.” To the minor proposition of this argument, we answer by a double distinction: the first, taken out of Stapleton, that a multitude or company of Christians may be said to be a true Church, either only because it hath the true nature and essence of a Church, or because, besides that, it hath all those things that pertain to the integrity and plenitude thereof. The second, that there is a double sincerity and purity of the profession of the truth of God revealed in Christ: the first, free from all damnable, fundamental, and pertinacious error; the other, from all error whatsoever. The former is an inseparable note of the true Church: for there is no being of a Church to be found where that sincerity and purity of profession is not. The latter is a note of a pure and perfect Church, and is inseparably proper unto it. So that, proportionably, sincerity and purity of profession is always inseparably proper to the Church: absolute to the Church that is absolutely perfect, and in an inferior degree and sort to that which is in any sort a Church. For seeing, as Stapleton rightly affirmeth, the true faith is the life of the Church, it cannot be the true Church that pertinaciously erreth in the substance and main grounds of the faith. What is a fundamental error, and what that pertinacity that cannot be found in the true Church of God, I will then make manifest when I come to speak of the nature of schism and heresy.

His third reason he proposeth in this sort—“Notes of the Church must be proper to the Church, and such things as are not to be found in any society or company of men besides; but this sincerity and soundness of profession may be found in other societies and companies of men besides, namely, amongst schismatics, as appeared in the Luciferians, and some others in the beginning of their schism; though for the most part, the better to justify their schismatical separation, they add heresy to schism.” To the major proposition of this argument we answer, that the notes of the Church are of two sorts—either absolute, full, and perfect, generally distinguishing it from all other societies whatsoever; or only from some certain. Those notes that absolutely and generally distinguish the Church from all other societies and companies whatsoever, are so peculiar to the true Church that they are not found anywhere else; but they which do distinguish it, but only from certain, are proper only *πρὸς ἑτέρον*, and respectively—that is, so that they are not found in any of those things from which they do distinguish it. Notes of the former sort are all those three things jointly concurring whereof I spake in the begin-

ning—to wit, entire profession of saving truth, and right use of sacraments, and union under lawful pastors. These jointly cannot be found among Pagans, Jews, heretics, and schismatics, nor any other seduced or misled people whatsoever. But the entire profession of saving truth, singly and by itself, is a note distinguishing the Church from infidels and heretics only, and so is not absolutely, but respectively proper to the true Church, so far forth that it is not found in any of these.

Fourthly, he reasoneth, that “purity of profession can be no note of the Church, for that absolute purity is not necessarily required to the being of the Church, for that the Church may be without it; and that other purity, free from essential and fundamental error, is no note, for that it doth not distinguish the Church from heretics: for there have been and may be heretics which err not in any matter directly fundamental.” But who seeth not that he reasoneth sophistically, from an imperfect division of the purity of the Church’s profession? For there are three sorts of it—the first, absolute, and that is not necessarily required in the being of the Church; the second, free from fundamental and essential error, and that is necessarily required in the Church and company of right believers, but it is not peculiar to it, for it may be found among heretics; and a third, free from pertinacious error, and that is ever found in the true Church, and never among heretics. It is this last kind of purity of profession which we make a note of the Church.

Lastly, he endeavoureth to improve the notes assigned by us, for that “notes must not only be inseparable and peculiar, but they must be such as may not be challenged or pretended by any other.” As if he should thus say: I may not direct my man to seek out one whom I desire to speak with, being in company with two or three more, by this note, that he is the tallest man of the company, though evidently he be so, if any one of the rest foolishly imagine himself as tall or taller; or by wearing a garment of some certain colour or dye, because some one or other, not exactly distinguishing the diversities of colours, may think himself to have the like. “But (saith he) they must be so proper, that no other must pretend or challenge them, with any probability.” This likewise is false, even in the notes which himself bringeth: for who knoweth not that the Grecians and others pretend antiquity, succession, universality, and the like, as well as the Church of Rome, and that not without all probability? Thus we see how weakly this great champion hath performed that which he undertook.

Of Stapleton's reasons against our Notes of the Church.

LET us see if Stapleton quit himself any better. His first reason is taken from the uncertainty of our doctrine, in this sort—"The doctrine of the Protestants is most uncertain, doubtful, and full of contradiction; therefore they do unadvisedly make truth of doctrine a note of the Church: for the notes of the Church must be constant and perpetual." The antecedent of this argument we reject as most false and calumnious: for the whole course of our doctrine is most constant and certain, as shall appear by that which followeth. That which he allegeth, that we agree not touching the nature, quality, and members of the Church, is sufficiently refuted by that which I have already delivered touching that matter in the former part.

Secondly, he reasoneth from our confession; "for (saith he) Calvin and Melancthon acknowledge these notes to be uncertain." This, whoso taketh a view of the places cited by him, shall find to be most false. Calvin, indeed, saith, that not the bare preaching of the truth, but the receiving, embracing, and professing of it, is necessary to the being of the Church; but touching the uncertainty of these notes he saith nothing. That which he objecteth, that we make the Church to be only the number of the elect, and that therefore it cannot be known by these notes, is answered in the refutation of Bellarmine's first reason.

His third allegation is this—"There are many that do truly pertain to the Church to whom these notes agree not; therefore they are no notes of the Church." The antecedent we deny. He proveth it out of our own doctrine. "Many not yet called pertain to the Church, but these notes agree not to such; therefore there are many to whom these notes agree not which yet pertain to the Church." To the major proposition, we answer thus:—Of them that pertain to the Church there are two sorts; for some pertain to it actually, some potentially only, and according to the purpose of God's will. To both these, these notes agree, but in different sort and manner: to them that are actually of the Church they actually agree, for they do presently make profession of the truth of God, and join with the people in the use of holy sacraments appointed by him; to them that potentially, and according to the purpose of God's will, pertain to the Church, as do all the elect not yet outwardly called, these notes agree only potentially, and according to the purpose of God's will, for that in due time they shall come to the knowledge and profession of the truth, and use of those happy means of salvation which others actually enjoy.

His fourth objection, that "the entire profession of the truth agreeth to schismatics," is answered already, being likewise objected by Bellarmine.

Fifthly, he reasoneth thus—"The truth of heavenly doctrine and right use of sacraments are no notes of the Church, because they do not show us which is the Church." We answer that they do: he proveth they do not, because "the true Church is known of us before we can know any of these." This we deny; for we say a man must know which is true doctrine, and what is the right use of sacraments, before he can know which is the true Church. This he thinketh impossible, because we seek to learn the truth of the Church; and therefore we must in the beginning of our enquiry know which is the true Church, and where assuredly truth is found, or else our whole search and enquiry is doubtful, uncertain, and often without success. For the clearing of this doubt, we must observe, that seeking is a motion of the mind, desiring to know where a thing is, or what it is. He that desireth to know where a thing is, either knoweth the place within compass whereof he is sure it is, or else his search his doubtful, uncertain, and often in vain. What a thing is, we desire to know, either by our own discourse, or by the instructions or directions of another. He that seeketh after a thing, desiring to know it by the directions of another, either knoweth not particularly and certainly of whom to enquire, with assurance that from him he shall receive satisfaction—and this kind of search and enquiry is always doubtful, and often without success—or else he knoweth particularly of whom to enquire, with assurance of resolution and satisfaction. Now if we apply this which hath been said, to that which Stapleton allegeth, we shall easily answer his objection. For when infidels, and men wholly ignorant of the truth of God, begin first to seek it, they do not know certainly where they may find it; and, being left to themselves, would often seek in vain, as he saith: but being directed by Divine Providence, and the help of others, to the true Church, which they know not, and being taught by her, they are established in the persuasion of the truth taught by her, in such sort as they make no doubt of it; and are farther resolved that that must needs be the Church of God and company of them whom he loveth, where these truths are in such sort known and taught as they find them to be there. It is, therefore, untrue that Stapleton saith, that "the Church is better and sooner known than the doctrine of it." For the doctrine is in some sort known before we can know the Church that teacheth us. For even as a man wholly ignorant, and knowing none of the precepts and principles of geometry, cannot possibly know who

is learned in that kind of knowledge, but either casually, or by direction of others meeting with one excelling therein, learneth of him; and then, by that which he hath learned of him, knoweth him to be a skilful professor thereof, and ever after resorts unto him, if in anything he be doubtful, with assurance of satisfaction; whose perfections when he began to learn he knew not, but either casually met with him, or by the direction of others, and not of his own choice: so we know not the Church, what it is, which it is, nor how excellent it is, till we have learned some part of the doctrine it teacheth, and are directed to it without any certainty of our own knowledge; but being once established in the certainty of the truth of the things she teacheth, we thereby know her to be the Church of God, beloved of him, led into all truth by him, and appointed a faithful witness and skilful mistress of heavenly truth; and then, in all our doubts and uncertainties, we ever after resort unto her, with full assurance of satisfaction and resolution. Thus, then, we see how both the Church showeth us the truth of heavenly doctrine, and that again the Church, but in different sort; the Church doctrinally proposing to us what we must embrace and believe; and the doctrine of the truth believed and embraced by us really demonstrating to us *that* to be the Church in which so precious and saving truths are taught and professed; and that the first repair and resort of infidels to the Church proceedeth from the direction of others, or something which they see, that maketh them enquire farther after her; but not from their own knowledge of her infallibility, and the precious treasures of heavenly truth which she possesseth, as Stapleton vainly fancieth.

In his sixth objection, first he saith, "Truth of doctrine and right use of sacraments are things without which the Church is not entire and full;" contrary to Bellarmine, who therefore excludeth them from being notes, because they are separable, and the Church may be without them. Secondly, in the same place he saith, that "these things do depend of the Church, flow from it, and are in order of nature after the being of it, not giving being to it, or concurring in the constitution of it; and therefore cannot be notes." But elsewhere he saith, "the things that give being to the Church are the same with the Church;" and so cannot be more evident nor easy to be known than the Church itself. Thirdly, in his seventh reason he saith, "these are the notes whereby wise and spiritual men do know the Church;" and again, in his ninth, that "to demonstrate the Church by these notes, is *demonstrare idem per idem*—to demonstrate the same by the same. For (saith he) when we ask which is that society that holdeth the true profession, &c.,

they that assign these notes answer, it is that which holdeth the true profession," &c. If this man be not possessed with a spirit of giddiness, saying and unsaying, affirming and denying the same things in the very same page, and so indeed saying he knoweth not what, let the reader, how partial soever he be, judge.

To that which he addeth, that "faith is known from infidelity, religion from superstition, a believer from an infidel, and a Catholic from an heretic, by true doctrine and right use of sacraments; that they are essential to them and give them their being; but that the whole collected multitude of right believers must be known by those things which are proper and essential to such an united multitude, as universality, and the like;" we say, that there is nothing, besides sincerity of profession and right use of sacraments, essential to the Church as a collected multitude, but only order and orderly connexion or union of men concurring in these, while some authorized thereunto do teach, direct, and command—others, obey; which, if we add to the former two, we shall find all and only those notes which we assign. Neither are sincere profession, and right use of sacraments, so essential to believing and catholic men, that they do sufficiently distinguish them from schismatics, unless this be added, that they "hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace:" so that as they do not sufficiently distinguish the whole body of the Church from the conventicles of schismatics, unless an orderly connexion of men concurring in them be added, which orderly union or connexion is essential to the Church as a collected multitude, so do they not a Catholic from a schismatic. But, on the other side, who is so foolish as to deny, that the profession of truth and right use of sacraments are essential to the whole body of the Church? seeing, as Stapleton himself saith, * "Right faith is the very life and soul of the Church;" which is nothing else but an orderly multitude of right believers, and is collected and gathered in the true faith of Christ, and hope of eternal happiness; which as it cannot be known and discerned from the conventicles of schismatics, by right faith and due use of sacraments only, without the addition of orderly connexion, so likewise, on the contrary side, it cannot be known without these; and therefore, of necessity, they must be notes, though not sole and only notes.

In the seventh there is nothing but that which refuteth that himself elsewhere saith, or is refuted by him. For when he saith, that "wise men do know and discern the Church by the notes assigned by us," he doth acknowledge that they do demon-

* "Recta fides est anima ecclesia."

strate the Church in the most perfect sort that may be, which in his ninth he denieth, saying, that “to demonstrate the Church by them, is to demonstrate the same by the same;” and in his eighth, maketh it “savour of heresy, at least, to think to find out the true Church by them.” Whereas, in the same place, he appropriateth these notes only to the wiser sort of men, as not being within the compass of ignorant men’s conceit. Surely those which he assigneth are less obvious to the knowledge of the vulgar sort than these, as shall appear in that which followeth.

His eighth reason, that “the notes of the Church must be such as may not be challenged or pretended by the heretics,” is answered already, in the refutation of the reasons brought by Bellarmine. That which he addeth concerning their notes, of antiquity, unity, succession, and universality, “that they are so clearly proper and peculiar to the Church of Rome, that we do not deny them to agree to it, but deny them to be notes of the true Church,” is wholly false. For we peremptorily deny any of these notes to agree to the Romish Church; and with such explication as they (forced with our arguments) now make of them, we most willingly admit them, and will prove that they differ not really from them assigned by us.

His ninth, that “the notes assigned by us are no notes of the Church, because to demonstrate the Church by them is to demonstrate the same by the same; for that when we ask which is the true Church, we ask which is the Church that holdeth the true profession and right use of the sacraments;” is a mere sophistical cavillation. For the better manifestation whereof we must observe, that he that seeketh to find out the true Church at the first is wholly ignorant of whatsoever pertaineth to the nature and being of it, as infidels that know not what the very name of the Church importeth; and then surely the first thing that he who is thus wholly ignorant enquireth after, is not, which is that society that holdeth the profession of saving truth, as Stapleton saith (for he knoweth not that there is any such profession, or society so professing), but about the signification of the word, and meaning of the name of the Church; whom we satisfy, if we say no more but that it is a society or company of men, called by the working of grace to the hope of eternal happiness. But if, when he knoweth thus much, and is not ignorant what the word importeth, he do farther desire to know which among all the societies of men in the world it is that hath this happy and precious hope, we satisfy him by showing him what things are so peculiar and proper to it, that wheresoever he findeth them he may assure himself, that

that company and society of men hath the assured hope of eternal happiness, and is the true Church of God ; as, namely, the entire profession of revealed truth, according to the rule of faith left by Christ, and the right and due use of sacraments, under lawful pastors and guides appointed to conduct the sons of God in the ways of their eternal bliss and happiness. Now when he knoweth the entire profession of saving truth, &c., to be proper and peculiar to the true Church, if yet still he know not truth from error, and the right use of sacraments from the profanation of them, and therefore ask of us, in the third place, which is the true profession, and which is the multitude that hath it, we will not tell him, as Stapleton vainly fancieth, that it is that which holdeth and embraceth the truth ; but we will show him how to know truth from falsehood, that so, wheresoever he findeth it professed and taught, he may know that society that so professeth as he now knoweth the truth in Christ to be, is the true Church of God. Even as if one ask of us, how he may know such a nobleman's servants in the prince's court, we satisfy him if we tell him they are clothed with scarlet, if none other but they only be so clothed ; but if he know not scarlet, and so ask of us, in the second place, which is scarlet, and who they are that wear it, we will not tell him they that wear it, but show him how he may know it, that so when he seeth it he may assure himself he hath found the men he enquired after.

Of their Notes of the Church, and first of Antiquity.

THUS having answered the reasons brought by our adversaries against the notes of the Church assigned by us, let us proceed to take a view of such as are allowed by them, and see if they be not the very same in substance with ours. The notes that they propose unto us are antiquity, succession, unity, universality, and the very name and title of Catholic, expressing the universality. Antiquity is of two sorts—primary and secondary. Primary is proper unto God, who is eternal, whose being is from everlasting, who is absolutely the first, before whom nothing was, and from whom all things receive being, when as before they were not. This kind of antiquity is a most certain proof and demonstration of truth and goodness. Of this they speak not who make antiquity a note of the Church. Wherefore, letting this pass, let us come to the other, which, for distinction sake, we name secondary antiquity. This is of two sorts : the first we attribute to all those things which began to

be long ago, and since whose first beginning there hath been a long tract of time. This is no note, or proof of truth or goodness; for the devil was both a liar and a murderer long ago, even immediately after the beginning. And there are many errors and superstitions which began long since, yea, before the name of Christians was once named in the world; and sundry heresies, that were coeval with and as ancient as the apostles' times, and that began before the most famous Churches in the world were planted. This kind of antiquity it is that Cyprian speaketh of: * "We must not regard what any other did before us, or thought fit to be done; but what Christ did, who was before all. Neither must we follow the customs of men, but the truth of God." And in another place: "We must not prescribe upon custom, but persuade by reason." And writing to Pompeius: "Custom without truth is nothing else but inveterate error." There is, therefore, another kind of antiquity, which is not long continuance, or the being before any other; but the prime, first, and original being of each thing: this is a sure proof of goodness and perfection. For all defects found in things are swervings, declinings, and departures from their original and first estate: for truth is before falsehood, and good before evil, and the habit before privation. Tertullian saith, † "the truth is before any counterfeit, similitude, or representation; the truth is first, and then afterwards there are imitations." That, therefore, that is first in any kind or sort of things, is truest and best; and consequently that Church that hath prime and absolute antiquity, is undoubtedly the true Church.

This antiquity a Church may be said to have three ways—either only because the first constitution of it was most ancient, as taking beginning from the first publishers of heavenly knowledge, the apostles of Christ, the immediate, indubitate, and prime witnesses of the truth of God, whatsoever her declinings have been since; or because, as her first constitution was most ancient, in that she received the faith from the apostles, or such as she knew undoubtedly to hold communion with them, so she is not since gone from it, in whole or in part, but still hath the

* "Non debemus attendere quid alius ante nos fecerit, aut faciendum putaverit; sed quid, qui ante omnes est, Christus prior fecerit. Neque enim hominis consuetudinem sequi oportet, sed Dei veritatem." Et alibi: "Non est de consuetudine præscribendum, sed ratione vicendum." Et ad Pompeium: "Consuetudo sine veritate, vetustas erroris est."

† "Veritas in omnibus imaginem antecedit postremò similitudo succedit."

same being she first had ; or, thirdly, because the profession it holdeth is the same that was delivered by the prime, immediate, and indubitate witnesses and publishers of the truth of God, though it began to be a Church but yesterday. The antiquity of the first constitution of a Church is no sufficient proof or note of the truth or soundness of it ; neither do they that plead most for antiquity think it a good proof for any company or society of Christians to demonstrate themselves to be the true Church of God, because they have had the profession of Christianity ever since the apostles' times, by whose means they were first converted to the faith, and established in the profession of the same. For then the Church of Ephesus might at this day prove itself a true Church of God ; yea, many Churches in Ethiopia are yet remaining which have continued in the profession of Christianity ever since the apostles' times. But this is all they say, that if any Church founded by the apostles, or their coadjutors, and left by them in the true profession, as were the Churches of Rome, Antioch, Ephesus, and the like, can demonstrate that they have not since departed from their first and original estate, they thereby do prove themselves to be the true Churches of God. And if any other that began since, as innumerable did, can show that they have the faith first delivered to the saints, they thereby prove themselves no less to be the true Church of God than the former, which had their beginning from the apostles themselves, and have continued in a state of Christianity ever since. Do we not see, then, that it is truth of doctrine whereby the Church is to be found out, even in the judgment of them that seem most to say the contrary ? They admit no plea of antiquity on the behalf of any Churches whatsoever, though established by the apostles, unless they can prove that they have not left their first faith. So that this is still the trial, if they may be found to have the truth of profession, &c. Whereupon Stapleton saith,* "It is not a sufficient reason for a society of Christians to challenge to itself the note of antiquity because it hath long continued and been before others in the profession of Christianity ; but besides it is required that it have anciently and ever holden the doctrine of truth. This is specially to be noted against old heresies, whereof some began in the apostles' times." And he saith of the Churches of Greece,

* "Ad notam antiquitatis sibi vendicandam, non satis est quòd aliqua societas sub titulo ecclesiæ Dni perduraverit, aut prior extiterit. sed præterea necesse est quòd sanam doctrinam semper, et priùs retinuerit. Hoc autem contra veteras hæreses, maximè ipsis apostolis coetaneas, notandum est."

Ethiopia, and Armenia, that though their antiquity did reach as high as the apostles' times, yet notwithstanding, "because they have brought in new doctrine, they have no true antiquity." *

Of Succession.

HITHERTO we have spoken of antiquity, which they make the first note of the Church : it followeth in the next place that we speak of succession. The ministry of pastors and teachers is absolutely and essentially necessary to the being of the Church ; for how should there be a Church gathered, guided, and governed without a ministry ? Therefore the ministry of those whom God sanctified to himself, to teach, instruct, and govern his people, is an essential mark and note of the Church, as we have already showed. Now, because the Church is not to last only for some short time, and so to cease, but to continue to the end of the world, this ministry must continue likewise ; which, because it cannot continue in the same persons (all being subject to death), it is necessary that, when some fail, others possess the places they formerly held, which is to succeed. Neither is this succeeding of one into the place of another necessary only by reason of that failing which is by death, but because the places of sacred ministry must not be unfurnished : if either the wickedness of them that are in place cast them out, or their weakness cause a voluntary relinquishment of their office and standing, others must succeed. Lawful and holy ministry, therefore, is an inseparable and perpetual note of a true Church, for no Church can be without it ; but succession not so, for the Churches in the first establishment in the apostles' time had it not, and many Churches, which in sundry ages since have been founded, had none, their bishops being the first, and succeeding none in those episcopal chairs wherein they sat. If, therefore, we should cavil against them as they do against us, we might deny succession to be a note of the Church, because there have been and may be true Churches without it ; as all at the first in the beginning of Christianity, and all others since newly founded, in their first beginnings. But because we know they make not succession of pastors and bishops a note of the Church, absolutely considered, but of that which, being formerly established, is still to be continued, by multitudes of men and people continually succeeding and coming into the places of others that

* "Propter doctrinæ novitates postea inventas, veram antiquitatem non habent."

went before them in the same profession of Christianity ; let us see whether succession of bishops and pastors may truly be said to be a note of the Church.

Absolutely and without limitation, doubtless it is not : for there may be a continued succession of bishops where there is no true Church, as at this day amongst the Grecians, Armenians, and Ethiopians, which yet are not the true Churches of God, in the opinion of them that plead for succession. Bellarmine therefore saith, that succession is inseparable, so that there can be no Church without it ; but that it is not proper : so that wheresoever it is found, we may assure ourselves that there is the Church ; so forgetting himself, who requireth in the notes that they be proper, and rejecteth our note of purity of doctrine free from pertinacious error, because it may be found among schismatics, though it be inseparable, and the true Church cannot be without it.

But Stapleton handleth this point of succession much better ; for he saith, that succession is an inseparable and proper note of the true Church ; but not every succession, but that which is true and lawful. Let us, therefore, see what he requireth, to make a true and lawful succession : first, there must be a place void by resignation, deprivation, or death ; secondly, they that succeed must have election and ordination from them to whom it appertaineth to elect and ordain ; thirdly, they must not depart from the faith that was formerly holden by them that went before, unless any of them did first decline and go aside from the way of the first and most ancient that held those places before ; and therefore, in the catalogue of bishops succeeding one another in each several see, wheresoever any first began to teach any new and strange doctrine, different from that which was formerly delivered, the thread and line of succession was by him either wholly broken or somewhat endangered, according to the quality of the error and the manner of defending and maintaining the same. So that this is all which Stapleton saith, that wheresoever we find a Church once established under a lawful ministry, in the undoubted profession of the truth, if afterwards there be a succession of pastors and bishops in the same place, and that none of them depart from the faith of the former, that so it may be evident that what faith was first holden is still holden by them that presently are in place, there we may assure ourselves to find the true Church.

Thus still we see, that truth of doctrine is a necessary note whereby the Church must be known and discerned, and not ministry, or succession, or anything else without it.

“ But (saith he) the people must not judge which is true doc-

trine and which is false, by the particular consideration of the things themselves ; but only by the newness, strangeness, and contrariety it hath with that which they have learned of their pastors, guides, and forefathers." He alloweth, then, a kind of judgment to the vulgar sort, who must discern which is the true doctrine and which is the false, though not by particular consideration of the things themselves that are taught, yet by the newness and strangeness of them. Touching the judgment the people of God ought to have of the doctrine of Christianity, I will speak when I come to the fourth part of my first and general division. In the meanwhile it sufficeth that not bare and naked succession, but true and lawful, wherein no new or strange doctrine is brought into the Church, but the ancient, religiously preserved, is a mark, note, or character of the true Church.

Of the third Note assigned by them, which is Unity.

THE third note of the Church assigned by them is unity. There are many sorts and degrees of unity found in the Church. The first, in respect of the same beginning and original cause, which is God, that hath called us to the fellowship of his Son, and to the hope of eternal life : "No man cometh unto me unless my Father draw him." The second, in respect of the same last end whereunto all they that are of the Church do tend, signified by that "penny given to every one of the labourers." The third is in respect of the same means of salvation as are faith, sacraments, holy laws, and precepts, according to that in Ephes. iv. : "One faith, one baptism," &c. The fourth, in respect of the same Spirit which doth animate the whole body of the Church : "There are diversities of graces, but the same Spirit." The fifth, in respect of the same head, Christ, and guides appointed by him, who, though they are many, yet are all holden in a sweet coherence and connexion amongst themselves, as if there were but one episcopal chair and office in the world ; which unity of pastors and bishops, though they be many, and joined in equal commission, without dependence one of another, Christ signified by directing his words specially to Peter, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs," as Cyprian most aptly noteth. The sixth is in respect of the connexion which all they of the Church have amongst themselves and with Christ, and those whom he hath appointed in his stead to take care of their souls : "We are one body, and members one of another." These being the divers kinds and sorts of unity in the Church, let us

see what unity it is which they make a note of the Church. The unity which they make a note of the Church is, first, in respect of the rule of faith and use of the sacraments of salvation; secondly, in respect of the coherence and connexion of the pastors and bishops amongst themselves; thirdly, in the due and submissive obedience of the people to their pastors.

This is it, then, which they say, that wheresoever any company and society of Christians is found in orderly subjection to their lawful pastors, not erring from the rule of faith, nor schismatically rent from the other parts of the Christian world by factious, causeless, and impious division, that society of men is undoubtedly the true and not offending Church of God. This note thus delivered is the very same with those assigned by us. But if any of them shall imagine that any unity and agreement whatsoever of Christian people amongst themselves, doth prove them to be the Church of God, we utterly deny it. For the Armenians, Ethiopians, and Christians of Muscovia and Russia, have every of them an agreement amongst themselves, though divided each from other, more perfect than they of the Church of Rome have; which yet, in the judgment of the Romanists, are not the true Churches of God.

Of Universality.

THE next note assigned by them is universality. Concerning universality, Bellarmine observeth three things: first, that to the universality of the Church is required, that it exclude no times, places, nor sorts of men; in which consideration the Christian Church differeth from the Synagogue, which was a particular Church tied to one time, being to continue but to the coming of Christ, to a certain place—to wit, the temple at Jerusalem, out of which they could not sacrifice—and to one family, the sons of Jacob. Secondly, he noteth out of Augustine, that to the universality of the Christian Church it is not required that all the men of the world should be of the Church, but that at the least there should be some, in all provinces of the world, that should give their names to Christ: for till this be performed, the day of the Lord shall not come. Thirdly, he noteth out of Driedo, in his fourth book “*De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus*,” that it is not required that this should be all at once, so that at one time necessarily there must be some Christians in all places of the world: for it is enough, if it be successively. “Whence (saith he) it followeth, that though but only one province of the world should retain the true faith, it might

truly and properly be named the Catholic Church, if it could clearly demonstrate itself to be one with the Church and company of believers, which, if not at one time, yet at divers times hath filled the whole world. This it cannot demonstrate but by making it appear that it hath neither brought in any new and strange doctrine in matter of faith, nor schismatically rent itself from the rest of the Christian world."

This note of universality, thus understood, we willingly admit; for it is the same with those we assign. For we say, what Church soever can prove itself to hold the faith once delivered to the saints, and generally published to the world, without heretical innovation, or schismatical violation and breach of the peace and unity of the Christian world, is undoubtedly the true Church of God. But out of this, which Bellarmine hath thus truly, wisely, and fitly observed, touching universality, we may deduce many corollaries of great consequence in this controversy touching the Church.

The first, that it may be the true and Catholic Church, which neither presently is nor ever hereafter shall be in all or the most parts of the world, if it can continue itself and prove itself one with that Church which formerly, at some time or times, hath been in the most parts thereof. From whence it is easy to discern the vanity of their silly objection against us, who say our Church began, not at Jerusalem, in the feast of Pentecost, but at Wirtemberg, or Geneva, in this last age of the world; and that it is not likely, beginning so late, that ever it will so far enlarge itself as to fill the whole world, and so become catholic, or universal. For we do not imagine that the Church began at Wirtemberg or Geneva, but that in these, and sundry other places of the Christian world, it pleased God to use the ministry of his worthy servants for the necessary reformation of abuses in some parts of the Catholic Church, which, beginning at Jerusalem, spread itself into all the world, though not at all times nor all places in like degree of purity and sincerity. So that, though the Reformed Churches neither presently be, nor perhaps hereafter shall be, in all or the most parts of the world, yet are they Catholic, for that they do continue themselves with that Church which hath been, is, or shall be, in all places of the world before the coming of Christ, and undoubtedly already hath been in the most parts thereof. The second, that the true Church is not necessarily always of greater extent, nor the multitude of them that are of it greater, than of any one company of heretics or unbelievers. The third, that the true Church cannot be at all times infallibly known from the factions of heretics, by multitude and largeness of extent.

The fourth, that this contrarieth not the sayings of Augustine, and others of the Fathers, who urge the ample extent of the Church as a proof of the truth thereof; for that they lived and wrote in those times when the Church was in her growth, and we are fallen into the last and worst times, wherein she is in her declining.

Of the Name and Title of Catholic.

THE fifth note assigned by them is the name and title of Catholic, which they say is an undoubted proof of the true Catholic Church, wheresoever it is found. And because our adversaries do not more insolently boast and glory of anything than of the bare and empty name and title of Catholic, I will, therefore, make it evident to all them that know their right hand from their left, that, howsoever it was in the days of the Fathers, it is not now proper to the true Church, but common to schismatics and heretics; and therefore that it cannot now serve as a mark or note distinctive, whereby the true Church may be known from unbelievers. This, therefore, is to be reckoned amongst those things that are proper and peculiar to the true Church, but not perpetually proper; and so amongst those notes that may difference the true Church from the false, at some times, and not at others.

The title of Catholic doth most fitly express those, both Christian men and societies of Christians, which hold the common faith, without particular divisions from the main body of Christianity. While, therefore, there was but the main body of Christianity at unity in itself, and such portions of seduced and misled people as apparently divided themselves from it, the name of Catholic was a note and distinctive mark or character, to know and discern a Catholic from an heretic or schismatic by, and the naming after the name of any man a note of particularity and heretical or schismatical faction. Whereupon one of the ancients said fitly to this purpose: "Christian is my name, and Catholic is my surname; by the one I am known from infidels, by the other from heretics and schismatics." But when the main body of the Christian Church divided itself, partly by reason of different ceremonies, uses, customs, and observations; partly through the ambitious strivings of the bishops and prelates of the greatest, richest, and most respected places; partly by occasion of some different opinions; the name of Catholic remained common to either of the parts thus divided, sundered, and rent one from another, though on the one side rested not

only error, but heresy also, in the opinion of the other. For who knoweth not that the Christians of the Greek and Oriental Church are and have been as generally named Catholics, as the friends and followers of the Western or Latin Church? Neither have they any name or note of faction, as all ancient heretics had; but as in former times, before this schism began, for distinction sake, the whole Christian Church was divided into two moieties, the one called the Occidental or Latin, and the other the Oriental or Greek Church; so are they by the same notes of difference, and no other, known at this day. Yet are the Grecians, Armenians, Ethiopians, and others in the east part of the world, in the judgment of the Romanists, not only schismatics, but heretics also.

It was, therefore, more than ordinary impudence in Bellarmine to affirm, that the name of Catholic is a note of true Catholic profession, when he knew it to be common to such as himself pronounceth heretics. And it is yet more intolerable that he saith, there is no heresy which receiveth not her name from some particular man, the author and beginner of it; and that whosoever are named after the names of men are undoubtedly heretics. For of what man had the Apostolici their name, whose author and first beginner was never known (as Bernard saith), that we might assure ourselves the devil was the author of that damnable sect? And who dare pronounce all the Thomists, Scotists, Benedictines, and the like, to be heretics? That we may, therefore, make his folly to appear in that he saith concerning heretics, and the naming after the names of men, as we did in the former part, touching the name and title of Catholic, we must observe, that heretics sometimes have their names from the matter wherein they err, as the Monothelites in old time, and the Anabaptists in ours; the first affirming, that there is but one will in Christ—whence they were named Monothelites; the other urging rebaptization of such are baptized by heretics—whence they are named Anabaptists, that is, rebaptizers: sometimes of that they arrogantly challenge to themselves, and make pretence of, as the Apostolici, for that they challenged to themselves more than ordinary perfection, as equalling the apostles, or coming nearer to their examples and precedents than other men: sometimes of the place where they began and most prevailed, as the Cataphruges: sometimes of the first author of their heresy, as Marcionites, Donatists, and the like. Thus, then, we see all heretics have not their names from men.

But they will say, they were all heretics that were named after the names of men. Surely it is not to be denied but that the

naming after the names of men was, in the time of the primitive Church, peculiar and proper to heretics and schismatics only.

Neither were there any Christians in the first ages of the Church called after the names of men, but such as followed wicked seducers in schism or heresy; whereupon it was a sure rule in ancient times, that whosoever, professing themselves Christians, were named after the names of men (as Nonatians of Nonatus, Pelagians of Pelagius), they were to be holden for heretics. This rule is delivered by Jerome, against the Luciferians: "If anywhere thou find men, professing Christianity, called after the particular names of men, know them to be the synagogue of antichrist, and not the Church of Christ." But as the honourable title of Catholic, sometimes a note of the true and orthodox Church, is now ceased to be so; in like sort the naming after the names of men, sometimes a note of heresy, is now ceased to be so; which to be most true the sundry manifold and divers names of Dominicans, Franciscans, Benedictines, Augustinians, Thomists, Scotists, and the like, do make it most apparent. And besides this, there are at this day innumerable Christians in the east parts of the world that are called Nestorians, that hold not the heresy of Nestorius, nor any other special heresy, whence they might have any such name of division, faction, or particularity.

For the better clearing of whatsoever may seem doubtful in this matter of names, titles, and appellations, we must observe, that they which profess the faith of Christ have been sometimes, in later ages of the Church, called after the special names of such men as were the authors, devisers, and beginners of such courses of monastical profession as they made choice of to follow, as Benedictines, and the like; sometimes of such principal men whose judgment and opinion they embraced and followed, in sundry matters of great moment in the controversies of religion, not yet determined by consent of the whole universal Church: and so in our times, amongst the school divines, some following Thomas, and others Scotus, in many and sundry main contradictory opinions, some were named Thomists, others Scotists; sometimes of such men whose new, strange, and private opinions, contrary to the Church's faith, they pertinaciously embraced and followed—as Arians of Arius, Eutichians of Eutiches; yea, sometimes of some arch-heretic, whose opinions and heresies they hold not—as at this day the greater part of the Christians that are in Assyria, Persia, and the rest of the eastern provinces, are called Nestorians, by all other Christians in those parts, as the Jacobites, Maronites, Cophti, and the like; yet do they hold nothing that savoureth of Nestorius's heresy,

as Onuphrius reporteth in the life of Julius III., in whose time sundry of them came to Rome.

These in likelihood are called Nestorians, for that in former times the heresy of Nestorius prevailed much in those parts of the world, which now being clearly banished, the right believing Christians of those parts are still, notwithstanding, called by that odious and hateful name ; or else it is by wrong and unjust imputation ; as the Armenians are judged by many to be Eutichians, for that they receive not the Council of Chalcedon, which they refused to subscribe unto, upon a false suggestion and apprehension, that in it the heresy of Nestorius, condemned in the Council of Ephesus, was revived again. Sometimes of such as collected, gathered, and brought into a certain order, for the better direction of God's people in his service, the prayers of the Church, and forms of administering the sacraments, and other holy things, or else augmented, altered, or reformed those that were before. So when there grew a division among the Churches of this part of the world, some following the form of divine administration left by Ambrose, others embracing that prescribed by Gregory, some were called Ambrosian, and some Gregorian Churches. As likewise in our times, when Luther, Calvin, and other worthy servants of God, had persuaded some states of Christendom to reform, correct, and alter some things that were amiss, and to remove and take away sundry barbarisms, errors, and superstitions, crept into the prayers of the Church, with many gross abuses and grievous abominations formerly tolerated in the midst of the Church of God ; those states, people, and churches, which reformed themselves, abandoning superstition and error, were by some called Reformed Churches, by others, Lutheran Churches. Neither was it possible that so great an alteration, as the corrupt state of the Church required, should be effected, and not carry some remembrance of them by whom it was procured. We see the sincerity of our Christian profession concerning the Son of God (whom we acknowledge co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father), cleared and published in the Nicene Council, was ever after, for distinction from the manifold turnings and windings of heretics, endeavouring to obscure, corrupt, alter, and adulterate the same, called the Nicene faith.

That the Church needed reformation when Luther began, and that it was not necessary nor behoveful to expect the consent of the whole Christian world in a general council, I will make it evident when I come to the third part of my first general division. In the meanwhile, it is most clear and evident, that the naming after the names of men is now no certain note of

heresy or schism. For if the naming after the names of men were a certain note of heresy or schism, then should all orders of monks and friars, that are named after the names of their first authors, be proved heretics; yea, the followers of Thomas and Scotus should be convinced of heresy, and all the Christians that are named Nestorians should be found heretics, which they which know them best do deny; yea, then all the Ambrosian and Gregorian Churches must be charged with heresy and schism.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

DURING THE APOSTOLIC ERA.

BY THE MOST REV.

JOHN POTTER, D.D., LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

WE have seen in what manner the Christian Church was governed whilst Christ, its founder, lived on earth : let us now enquire to whom the care of it was committed when he ascended into heaven. And since in temporal kingdoms, when any king dies the royal dignity is presently transferred to another, and in the kingdom of Israel other men succeeded in the places of Moses and David, the two great types of Christ ; it will here be enquired, whether, in this Christian Church or kingdom, it was necessary that, when our blessed Saviour left the world, any other should succeed him in the same office and character which he sustained ? Which question may easily be answered: that as this Christian kingdom must last till the general resurrection, so it will be governed by Christ, in his own person, till that time. The thrones of temporal kingdoms commonly become vacant by the death of those who filled them, and therefore must be possessed by others ; but “ Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more ”—he still “ lives through the power of God : ” and though he is absent in body from his Church, yet, being God as well as man, he is present in all places, and has promised to be with his apostles and their successors “ always, to the end of the world. ” All faithful Christians are still united to him as their head ; being many, they are still spoken of as “ one body in Christ, ” and on that account are “ every one members one of another. ” They still receive their life and nourishment from him, and are exhorted to “ grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ ; from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted, maketh increase. ” This vital influence is constantly imparted by the Holy Spirit, whom he sends to supply his place ; and the benefits which the Church receives

by the Spirit are greater than any which could be expected from the bodily presence of Christ himself; whence he assured his disciples, that it was expedient for them that he should go away, that he might send the Holy Ghost unto them. And he farther promised that the same Spirit should always remain with them: "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of Truth." And under this character of a perpetual king, our Lord was represented by Melchisedec, whose parentage, birth, death, and successors, having not been recorded to posterity, he was a very fit type of one, who is truly "without father and mother, without beginning of days or end of life, and abides a king and priest for ever."

It is therefore certain, that Christ cannot have any successor, strictly so called, in the government of the Church; but it remains to be enquired, whether he has entrusted any one man, or any number of men, to rule it as his deputies, or vicegerents; or whether he has left all his subjects in such a state of equality, that no Christian has any spiritual authority over another, besides what he is allowed to exercise by the agreement of Christians among themselves. For the answering of these and the like enquiries, I shall endeavour in this chapter to show—

First, that, when our Lord left the world, his apostles were entrusted with authority to govern the Christian Church.

Secondly, that this authority was entrusted equally with all the apostles.

Thirdly, I shall enquire, what inferior ministers had a share in it.

I. I am to show, in the first place, that, when our Lord left the world, the apostles were entrusted with authority to govern the Christian Church. For the more full proof of which proposition, these three things shall be made out.

First, that this authority is not repugnant to the nature of the Christian Church, or the rules of the Gospel.

Secondly, that this authority was actually conferred by our Lord on his apostles.

Thirdly, that the apostles exercised this authority after our Lord's ascension.

1. And, first, there is nothing in the nature of the Christian Church, or in the rules of the Gospel, but what is very consistent with this authority. If there be anything in the nature of the Christian Church so contrary to the nature of all other societies that it cannot be governed by officers subordinate to its chief governor, it must be this, that it is a spiritual society. Whence this indeed follows, that they who govern the Church can claim

no civil prerogative, nor enforce their laws with civil rewards or punishments, nor exercise any part of the power which belongs to the magistrates of temporal kingdoms: but it will be difficult to find a reason why, in a spiritual society, there may not be spiritual ministers, who are subordinate to the chief spiritual head, and act by his commission, as well as in civil societies there are civil officers under the chief civil magistrate. And it rather follows, on the contrary side, that as in civil societies the supreme civil magistrate does commission others to exercise some part of his civil power; so in this spiritual society some part of the spiritual power may be communicated to fit persons by the supreme spiritual head, who is the fountain of this power.

Neither is there anything in the rules of the Gospel which is inconsistent with the having or exercising of such an authority. Some have wrested to this purpose those passages of Scripture which recommend humility and lowliness of mind, and command us to esteem others, and in honour to prefer them above ourselves; and others, wherein the Pharisees are blamed for affecting to have “the chief places in the synagogue, and the uppermost rooms at feasts, and to be called masters and fathers;” which are so many lessons against pride and ambition, but no more repugnant to a just use of spiritual power and authority, than they are of temporal, and have been urged with no less force by those who are enemies to all civil government, and to the civil distinctions of orders amongst men, than they are by such as would destroy all spiritual jurisdiction and pre-eminence.

However, there is one saying of Christ, which, because it has been much insisted on by those who contend for an equality among Christians, may be thought to deserve a more particular consideration. It is that in which we are told, that when the ten apostles were moved with indignation against the two brethren, James and John, who had desired the chief places in Christ’s kingdom, “Jesus called them all unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them: but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Hence they conclude, that all distinction of degrees in the Christian Church—at least, all such as implies any jurisdiction of one Christian over another, and especially of one minister over another—is unlawful. For the correction of which error, these three things may be considered.

(1). That the design of this passage is to correct the vain-glorious humour which prevailed at that time among the apostles, who hoped to enjoy temporal principalities, and to live in outward pomp and splendour, under Christ. It is certain, that both they, and generally all the Jews, expected that the Messiah would erect a glorious temporal kingdom. Hence Herod, hearing that the Messiah was born in Bethlehem, caused all the infants thereabouts to be put to death, hoping, among the rest, to destroy his rival.

(2). It must be considered, that no power is denied to the apostles in this place, which was exercised at that time by Christ. Whatever it be which they are commanded to do, or to forbear, it is enforced by our Lord's own example in all the three evangelists, who have related this story: "For the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Or as it is expressed by St. Luke: "I am among you as he that serveth." So that, unless we are willing to affirm that our Lord exercised no spiritual power over his apostles, we cannot conclude that he forbade his apostles the exercise of this power over others.

(3). It may be farther considered, that the same sort of power and dignity which belonged to our Lord, as King of his Church, was promised to the apostles at the very time wherein he spoke the forementioned words: for, having forbidden them to expect the same dominion which the kings of the Gentiles exercised over their subjects, he presently adds, as it were to support their spirits under this disappointment, that he would give them such a kingdom as God had appointed him: "And I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed to me, that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

So that we may safely conclude, the whole design of this passage was to restrain the ambitious desire of temporal greatness which then prevailed among the apostles; or should we allow it to have any respect to spiritual power or dignity, which it does not appear to have, the meaning of it can only be this—that the apostles were not to make use of it in the same manner, or for the same ends, as the kings of the Gentiles used to employ their authority, that is, to serve their vanity and other lusts, but for the service and benefit of the people committed to their charge; even as Christ himself, the great King of kings, came not into the world to be ministered unto by his subjects, and to gratify himself, but rather to minister to them, and for their service and advantage.

2. I hope it has appeared that it is no way repugnant to the

nature of the Church, or the rules of the Gospel, that the apostles should be entrusted with authority to govern the Christian Church. Let us therefore enquire, in the second place, whether our Lord did actually entrust them with this authority.

And here we may remember, that neither our Lord, nor David, the great type of him, were instated at once in the full power and dignity which God had appointed them, but advanced to it by several degrees. Agreeably to these patterns, the plenitude of apostolic power was not conferred on the apostles at their first ordination, but given them at three different times.

First, after a whole night spent in solemn prayer, our Lord chose them to be with him as his constant attendants and ministers, and to preach the Gospel. They had also power to baptize, though that be not expressed in their commission; which is evident from St. John's Gospel, where it is said, that "Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples." All which offices have been generally executed in the Christian Church, since our Lord's ascension, by the deacons, or third order of ministers.

After this they received authority to commemorate our Lord's sacrifice on the cross, when he commanded them at his last supper to do as he had done; that is, to bless the elements of bread and wine in remembrance of him. Which office has constantly been performed, in all ages of the Church, by the presbyters, or second order of ministers.

Thirdly, when our Lord was going to leave the world, he again enlarged their powers: in the doing whereof this deserves to be observed, that the apostles were admitted to their office in the same manner wherein our Lord entered upon his; and scarce any power is said to belong to our Lord which he did not confer on them. Our Lord was anointed from his mother's womb to be a King, Priest, and Prophet; but did not actually execute any of these offices till the Holy Ghost, descending visibly from heaven upon him, had anointed him the second time. In like manner he appeared to the apostles after his resurrection, and gave them this commission: "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you. And when he had said this he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Nevertheless, they were not yet to enter upon their office till the Holy Ghost, descending in a visible manner, should give them power. The Holy Ghost descended on our Lord at his baptism, and therefore he used the same word of baptizing the apostles with it: "Ye shall be baptized (said he) with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." This was done

upon the day of Pentecost next following, and then they began to preach the Gospel. Their government was of the same nature with the government of Christ; for thus he promised: "I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed to me." Our Lord received from God the keys of heaven, and by virtue of this grant had power to remit sins on earth. The same keys, with the power which accompanied them, was first promised to Peter, as the foreman of the apostolic college, and afterwards actually conferred on all the apostles, in these words: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." "The Father committed all judgment to his Son," and set him on his right hand; and our Lord promised, that when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, the twelve apostles should "sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Our Lord is the chief Shepherd, and his apostles, as shepherds under him, are entrusted with the care of his flock. Our Lord at first was only King of the Jews, but after his death received power over all the world; and by virtue of this he commissioned the apostles, who till that time had only been sent to the house of Israel, to admit all nations into his Church: "All power (says he) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them." Our Lord was the foundation and the corner-stone on which the Church was built; and the apostles are also spoken of as a part of this foundation: the wall of the new Jerusalem is said to have "twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles." And St. Paul tells the Ephesians that they are "the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

3. In what manner the twelve apostles exercised their authority after our Lord's ascension. And whoever carefully reads over the New Testament will find, that scarce any act of power was done by our Lord, whilst he lived on earth, which was not, at least, in some degree, exercised by the apostles after his ascension. In order to have a more clear and distinct view of what was done by the apostles, let us first consider those acts of theirs which had a relation to the Christian people without distinction; and afterwards, such as concerned only the inferior and subordinate ministers of the Church.

First, let us take a view of those acts which had a relation to the Christian people without distinction. And as our Lord, having received his unction by the Holy Spirit, presently began to preach, and to baptize disciples; so the same Spirit having descended on the apostles at the time of Pentecost, on that very

day they preached the Gospel with such wonderful success, that no less than three thousand souls were then baptized.

The disciples of Christ followed him, and the new converts “steadfastly continued in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship.”

Our blessed Saviour left so complete a system of all religious and moral duties, that no addition of new duties could be made to it; and therefore the apostles could not be law-givers in so ample and extensive a manner as their Master: but when any of Christ’s laws wanted to be explained, recourse was had to them, and their sentence was everywhere obeyed. Besides this, they enjoined whatever was farther necessary towards the peace of the Church, or the order and decency of divine worship. Many examples of their exercising this power must not be expected in the Acts, which seldom relate anything farther than the first conversion of Churches to the faith, and do not inform us how they were governed afterwards. However, there is one famous instance, wherein the apostles and elders of Jerusalem, upon an appeal from the Churches in other countries, decreed that the converts from Gentilism should be excused from observing the law of Moses, some few precepts, which were necessary for those times, excepted. And if we go on to the Epistles of St. Paul, we shall find that he exercised this authority in all the Churches under his care. The whole of the seventh, eighth, eleventh, and fourteenth chapters of his first Epistle to the Corinthians consist of laws and directions for the Church of Corinth, many of which were never expressly enjoined by Christ, and some of them are expressly required by the apostle’s own authority: “And to the married, I command; yet not I, but the Lord: but to the rest speak I, not the Lord.” He promiseth to make more laws at his next coming to them: “And the rest will I set in order when I come.” He speaks of other rules, and those also such as we do not find to have been made by Christ, which he appointed in other Churches: “And so ordain I in all Churches.” He useth the same style of command to the Thessalonians: “We have confidence that ye both do, and will do, the things which we command you. When we were with you, we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. Them that are such we command, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.” All which, with several other passages, do plainly imply an authority to make rules.

To this authority of prescribing rules, must be added that of enforcing these rules with suitable punishments. That the Corinthians believed St. Paul to have this power, appears from that passage wherein he speaks of their obedience, “how with fear and trembling they received Titus,” whom he had sent

with authority among them. And he does very often put them in mind of it: he tells them of his "authority and his power, which the Lord had given him for edification;" by virtue whereof he threatens to use sharpness, to come to them with a rod, and to revenge all disobedience; that he would not spare, and that he would be "found among them such as they would not." In his second Epistle to the Thessalonians he commands them to withdraw themselves "from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the traditions which he received of him." Again: "If any man (saith he) obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." In the same manner he requires the Corinthians "not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no, not to eat." And sometimes we find him passing sentence on particular offenders. He "delivered Hymenæus and Alexander unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme." And even in his absence he condemned the incestuous Corinthian: "I verily (saith he), as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, that such an one be delivered to Satan, and that he be put away from among you." And he strictly requires them to put this sentence in execution, and writes to know the proof of them, whether they be obedient, as in all other things, so particularly in this.

Lastly, to the exercise of this power of judging and condemning, let us join that of pardoning and absolving the condemned from punishment. This he exercised towards the incestuous person upon his repentance, as Christ's vicegerent: "Sufficient to such a man (saith he) is this punishment." And afterwards thus goes on: "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also; for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ;" that is, by his authority committed to me.

These are plain proofs that the Christian Church was then governed by the apostles. Yet it must not be concealed that there were some at Corinth who disclaimed St. Paul's authority; but upon what pretence was this done? Did they deny that the authority which he exercised belonged to the apostolic office? If this had been objected, it would have put him upon asserting the power of the apostles to govern the Church; but, instead of that, he only proves his own title to the apostolic office, which these men seem to have denied, because he had been a persecutor, and not one of the twelve: whence they rather chose to be called the followers of Apollos, who was an eloquent orator,

or of Cephas, the first apostle. In opposition to these schismatics, he proves himself to be an apostle, both in the general sense of that name, and particularly as he had been sent to preach the Gospel to them: "Am I not an apostle? If I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you, whom I have converted, and on whom I have conferred the gifts of the Holy Ghost; so that ye are the seal of mine apostleship in the Lord." In another place he tells them that he was "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles;" and that he had given full proof of his title to this office: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." So that this very objection is rather a proof that the apostles had such an authority as was exercised by St. Paul; since it appears that they who denied him this authority, did it on this pretence, that he was not an apostle; and the way he takes to assert his right to this authority, is only to prove his right to the apostolic office.

Thus I have considered some of the chief acts of authority which the apostles exercised over the Christian people without distinction: it is now time to proceed to those other acts which concerned the subordinate ministers of the Church. And here it will again appear, that all other ministers were subject to the apostles, almost in the same manner as they had before been to our Lord.

One of our Saviour's prerogatives, whilst he lived on earth, was the power of ordaining ministers; and this belonged to the apostles: the twelve together ordained the seven deacons; Paul and Barnabas ordained elders; and Paul, with the elders, ordained Timothy.

Whilst our Lord lived on earth, the apostles were his constant attendants, and were sent forth by him to preach, as he saw occasion. The like obedience and attendance was paid by the inferior ministers to the apostles, after our Lord's reception into heaven. Mark was first minister to Paul and Barnabas, and afterwards to Barnabas alone. When St. Paul was at Ephesus, he was attended by Timotheus and Erastus, whom he sent before him into Macedonia. Towards the latter part of the Acts, the author of that book, who is supposed to have been Luke, the evangelist, is spoken of as his constant attendant. Not to mention several others, whose attendance on the apostles, and especially on St. Paul, is spoken of in their epistles.

Baptizing was reckoned an inferior ministry, and as such was not performed by our Lord himself, but by his disciples. Neither did the apostles baptize in their own persons, but commonly deputed some of the ministers who waited on them to do it.

Cornelius and his family were converted by St. Peter's preaching, but he commanded them to be baptized, as it is probable, by some of the six brethren who accompanied him. St. Paul converted the Corinthians, and yet declares that, to the best of his remembrance, he baptized none of them, but Crispus, and Gaius, and the household of Stephanus; and he gives this reason for it—that Christ sent him “not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel:” the meaning of which words is not, that St. Paul wanted authority to baptize, which was conferred by our Lord on all his apostles, and exercised by St. Paul himself in baptizing the persons before mentioned; but he means that preaching was his principal business, and that he rather chose to depute inferior ministers, who had more leisure, and whose proper business it was to baptize. And thus he seems to have done at Ephesus, where his preaching to twelve disciples who had received John's baptism, and his conferring on them the gifts of the Spirit, are expressly mentioned; whereas it is only said they were baptized, without any mention of the person by whom their baptism was conferred, who probably was one of St. Paul's deacons. “When they heard this (that is, St. Paul's exhortation), they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; and when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them.”

This naturally leads us to another prerogative which belonged to our Lord, and afterwards to the apostles, namely, the power of giving the Holy Ghost. Philip, the deacon, preached the Gospel to the Samaritans, and baptized those of them who believed; but the Holy Ghost fell on none of them till Peter and John laid their hands on them.

It may be farther observed, that all other ministers, of what quality soever, were subject to the apostles, and that not only when they were present, but in their absence. We find that St. Paul, all along through his Epistles to Timothy and Titus, writes in a style which implies his authority over them. He tells Philemon, who is called his fellow-labourer, and therefore seems to have been a minister of the Gospel, that though he was willing for love's sake rather to beseech him, yet he might be bold in Christ (that is, by the power which our Lord had given him) to enjoin him what was convenient. He sends from Miletus, and calls thither the elders or bishops of Ephesus, to whom he gives a most solemn charge; which is a manifest sign that they were under his government. And at Corinth, where several prophets and evangelists were then present, the same apostle, being absent, both excommunicates and absolves, and enacts laws, some of which were to be observed by the gifted

ministers themselves : “ Let the prophets (saith he) speak two, or three, and let the rest judge.” Not to mention several other rules which he prescribes in the same place by his apostolic authority, and as Christ’s vicegerent : “ What ! came the word of God out from you, or came it to you only ? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.”

Lastly, the ministers who refused to pay the apostles their due respect and obedience, are everywhere censured as heretics, and disturbers of the Church’s peace. One of these was Diotrophes, who loved to have the pre-eminence, and rejected St. John’s authority, prating against him with malicious words, and casting out of the Church those who received and entertained the brethren ; for which crimes the apostle threatens to punish him. Some of them are called, by St. Paul, false apostles, deceitful teachers ; and he wishes to have others of them cut off for troubling the Church.

II. I hope it has been sufficiently proved, that the apostles were entrusted with authority to govern the Christian Church after our Lord’s ascension into heaven : let us now enquire, whether this authority was equally entrusted with all the twelve ; which was the second thing to be considered in this chapter.

And here it must not be denied, that some of the apostles were superior to the rest, both in personal merit and abilities, and in order of place. St. Paul speaks of some, namely, James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars, that is, principal supports of the Church, and were accounted chief apostles. And it is remarkable that, in all the catalogues of the twelve apostles which are extant in the Scriptures, Peter is constantly placed the first ; next to him these three, Andrew, James, and John, though not always in the same order ; and last of all, Judas Iscariot. It may be farther observed, that some of the twelve were admitted to a greater degree of confidence and familiarity with our Lord than others : John was his beloved disciple, and as such leaned on his bosom at his last supper. Peter, James, and John were present at his transfiguration, which they were commanded to conceal from all others. The same persons were admitted to be witnesses of his agony in the garden. When he raised the ruler of the synagogue’s daughter from the dead, he suffered no man to follow him, save these three. And he gave surnames of honour only to these three : to Simon, the name of Peter, or Cephas ; and to James and John, the name of Boanerges. The same persons, with Andrew, asked him privately concerning the destruction of Jerusalem,

and the end of the world. When the Greeks, who came to Jerusalem to worship at the feast of the passover, came to Philip, and desired him, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus," Philip did not presume to acquaint our Lord with their request till he had first told it to Andrew, who was the superior apostle, and then Andrew and Philip went together and told Jesus. Hence it plainly appears, that some of the apostles had a pre-eminence above others; and it may be observed farther, that in most places Peter is preferred before all the rest: whence our Lord often speaks to him, and he replies before, and as it were in the name of the rest. Thus, a little before our Lord's passion, he said, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Again, when Jesus found Peter, James, and John sleeping, he saith unto Peter, "Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch with me one hour?"—reproving the other two in the person of Peter. When many of our Lord's disciples forsook him, he spoke to all the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" Whereupon Simon Peter, in the name of the rest, answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go?—thou hast the words of eternal life." Again, when our Lord asked the twelve, "Whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered for the rest, "Thou art Christ." Whereupon our Lord again addresses his answer to him in particular, "Blessed art thou, Simon: I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Our Lord appeared to Peter, after his resurrection, before the rest of the apostles; and before this he sent the message of his resurrection to him in particular. From these and the like passages, it is evident that Peter was the foreman of the college of apostles whilst our Lord lived on earth; and it is plain that he kept the same dignity, at least for some time, after his ascension. For we find, in the beginning of the Acts, before the descent of the Holy Spirit, that, when the disciples were assembled together, Peter stood up in the midst of them, and propounded the election of a twelfth apostle into the place of Judas. After the Holy Ghost's descent, he speaks to the Jews in the name of the rest: "Peter, standing up with the eleven, said unto them." And Peter is often mentioned by name, when the rest are only spoken of in general. The Jews who were converted on the day of Pentecost, applying themselves to Peter and the rest of the apostles, said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter, as the foreman of the apostles, said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized." When the twelve apostles were brought before the high priest, Peter and the other apostles—that is, the rest of the apostles by Peter their foreman—answered and said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." When many signs and wonders were wrought by

the apostles, and the people magnified them on that account, a particular regard seems to have been paid to Peter above the rest ; for it is said, “ They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.” When Ananias and Sapphira had laid part of the price of their possession at the apostles’ feet, and kept back the rest, Peter said, in the name of all the rest, who were then present, “ Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost ?”—whereupon he presently fell down dead. And, lastly, he was the first whom God chose to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. From these and other examples which occur in the Scriptures, it is evident that St. Peter acted as chief of the college of apostles ; and so he is constantly described by the primitive writers of the Church, who call him the head, the president, the prolocutor, the chief, the foreman of the apostles, with several other titles of distinction.

What was the reason of this order in the apostolic college, is not agreed. Some are of opinion, that Peter was placed the first, as being the eldest ; but others affirm, that Andrew was his elder brother ; and it is certain this reason will not hold in the order of the rest, for then John, who is generally reckoned the youngest of the twelve, must have had the lowest place, whereas he is always reputed among the four first. Others rather think that a regard was had to the time in which they became our Lord’s disciples ; and it is plain that Andrew and Peter, and after them James and John, were called by our Lord, and followed him before any of the rest. And, though Andrew was first called, it is probable that Peter was the first who forsook all and followed Christ. Lastly, there are others who rather choose to derive the distinction of their places from the particular merit of some above others ; and it deserves to be observed, that as Judas, who kept the bag, and was a thief, was the last of all the twelve ; so Peter, who had the first place, does all along, through the whole history of the Gospels, show a greater zeal for our Lord’s honour and service than any of the rest.

But whatever was the true reason of this order, which we will not pretend to determine, since the Scriptures are silent, it is certain that nothing more was founded on it than a mere priority of place ; and that neither Peter, nor any other apostle, had any power or authority over the rest.* When they were

* Cyprianus, lib. de Unitate Eccles. “ Hoc erant utique et cæteri apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi et honoris et potestatis, sed exordium ab unitate proficiscitur, ut ecclesia una monstretur.”

first separated from the rest of our Lord's followers, they were all distinguished by the same common name of apostles, and there was not the least difference in their commission or instructions. But they were all alike admitted to be attendants and ministers of Christ, and authorized to preach the Gospel. Afterwards they were all equally commanded to commemorate our Lord's death, and received the same authority to teach and baptize all nations, and to remit and retain sins, and to execute all other parts of the apostolical office; and the Holy Spirit descended on them all, without any distinction, and sat upon each of them.

And if we consider the practice of the apostles, we shall find that none of them pretended to exercise any authority over the rest; but they all acted with the same power, and had an equal share in the management of all ecclesiastical affairs. On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up with the eleven to preach to the multitude. They who then received the faith applied themselves to Peter, and the rest of the apostles, to know what they should do; and, after they were baptized, continued in the doctrine and fellowship, not of Peter only, or any one beside, but of all the twelve apostles. They who sold their possessions for the use of the Church, laid down the price at the feet of all the apostles, who made distribution to every man, according as he had need: which, in succeeding ages, was one part of the episcopal charge, though the bishops were herein assisted by the deacons, in imitation of the apostles, who, finding this to be a very troublesome office, and to hinder them from their great work of preaching, ordained seven deacons to execute it under them. This we find in one of the following chapters, where it is said, that, "when the Grecians murmured against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration, the twelve called the multitude of disciples to them," and directed them to "look out seven men, whom we may (said they) appoint over this business:" and when the multitude had chosen the forementioned number of men, qualified as the apostles had directed, "they set them before the apostles, who, when they had prayed, laid their hands on them." Thus we find that all things were carried on by the joint authority of all the twelve: and it must here be observed farther, that particular members of the apostolic college were subject to the whole body. For "when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John," to confirm them in the faith, and to give them the Holy Spirit. And therefore, if our Lord's maxim be true, that "he who sendeth is greater than he who is sent by him," neither of

these two apostles, and by consequence none of the rest, who were all inferior in place to one or both of these, claimed any power or authority over the college of apostles.

However, it must not be forgotten, that, contrary to this plain account which the Scriptures give us of the apostles and their office, some have invested Peter with a primacy, not only of place, which we are willing, at least till this time, to allow him, but of power and jurisdiction over all the rest. Enough has already been said to confute this notion; nevertheless, lest any thing should be thought wanting to complete this part of our present subject, I shall briefly consider the chief passages of Scripture wherein this primacy is supposed to have been given him.

The principal of these texts is, that saying of our Lord, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and I will give unto thee the keys of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” In which words these two things are chiefly to be considered—

First, that Christ, having here given, or rather confirmed, to Simon the name of Peter, that is, a rock, which he had given him before, at the time when he first called him to be a disciple, presently adds, “Upon this rock I will build my Church:” whereby he seems to affirm, that Peter was the foundation on which the Christian Church should be built.

Secondly, that the keys of heaven, with the power of forgiving and retaining sins, are promised to him, without the least intimation that he should have a copartner in either of these prerogatives.

But to the first of these observations it may be answered, that, though the name of Peter signifies a rock, it does not follow that the person of Peter is the very rock on which the Church of Christ was to be built, but only that he had some relation to it: for it was common to give names to men or things from whatever they had a relation to. Thus the name of a certain place through which Jacob travelled was called Mahanaim, that is, two hosts; not because that place itself was two hosts, but from the hosts of God, that is, his angels, which met Jacob there. And Bethel was called Elbethel, or the God of Bethel, from God’s appearing to Jacob in that place. In the same manner, some of the ancient Fathers will have the rock, on which the Church is founded, to be the confession then made by Peter; and others understand it of Christ so confessed, who is in several other places of Scripture called the chief corner-stone, and the

foundation of the Church. And in whichsoever these senses it be taken, there is as much reason to think, that the apostle by whom this confession was made should hence be called a rock, as that the before-mentioned places should be called God, or the hosts of God, because God and his angels appeared there. Or supposing that Peter himself was the very rock on which Christ promised to build his Church, the same is elsewhere said of all the other apostles, whose names were all in the foundation of the wall of the new Jerusalem; and upon whom, as a foundation, the Ephesians, and by the same reason all other Christians, if we may believe St. Paul, were built: "Ye are built (saith he) upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

And then what was promised to Peter in the other part of this text, namely, that the keys of heaven, with the power of remitting and retaining sins, should be given him, was actually conferred on all the twelve apostles, to whom our Lord said, without any distinction, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." So that, if we may explain our Lord's promise by its completion, what is promised to Peter by name, as the foreman of the apostles, or because he had then made a particular confession of his faith, when the rest were silent, was equally promised to all the rest. And if this promise was not fulfilled to Peter at the same time and in the same manner as it was to all the rest, we do not find that it was fulfilled at all: for there is no power actually conferred in any place of the Scriptures upon Peter, which is not given to all the rest. Lastly, it is certain that the rest of the apostles did not conceive any power or pre-eminence over them to have been promised at this time to Peter, because after this James and John desired to be next in dignity to our Lord, and there was a contention among them and the other apostles who should be the greatest; which could not well have happened, if they had understood that this honour had been already granted to Peter.

Neither is there any better proof of Peter's authority over his fellow-apostles in the other passage commonly alleged for it, wherein our Lord commands him to feed his sheep; which includes nothing more than what was required of the other apostles, who were shepherds of the flock of Christ as well as Peter: but, it may be, this command was given to Peter by name, either as he was the foreman of the apostolic college, and represented all the rest, as he did at other times; or, rather, because he alone had lately denied and abjured his Master, and therefore had greater need than the rest to be admonished, and put in mind of his duty.

These are some of the chief texts of Scripture from which the supremacy of Peter has commonly been inferred ; the rest such as that where he pays tribute for Christ and himself, where he walks with Christ on the water, where Christ teaches the people in his ship, which they say was a type of the Christian Church, with others of no greater strength, scarce deserve to be mentioned. And it is certainly an argument that these men's cause is very defenceless, when they have recourse to such weak proofs for the support of an article, which, in their scheme of religion, is essential to the constitution of the Christian Church.

We have shown that all the apostles had equal authority over the Church ; and it is evident, from the first part of the Acts, that they lived some time at Jerusalem, and managed all ecclesiastical affairs together. It now remains to be considered, in what manner they governed the Church when they left Jerusalem, and lived apart.

And, in the first place, lest the mother Church of Jerusalem should be destitute of a fixed pastor, James, whom some call the son of Alpheus, and one of the twelve apostles, others the son of Joseph, the blessed Virgin's husband, by a former wife, but all speak of as our Lord's kinsman, was appointed the bishop of this place. Whether this was done by our Lord's express order, when he appeared to James apart from the rest after his resurrection, or by the free election of the apostles, is not agreed. However, it is constantly affirmed, by the ancient Fathers, that this James was the first Bishop of Jerusalem ; and on this account he is distinguished by the title of Bishop of Bishops, Prince of Bishops, Bishop of the Apostles, Prince of the Apostles, with others not inferior to those commonly given to Peter. The catalogues of the bishops of Jerusalem which are extant in the first Christian writers do all place James at the head of them ; and the throne, or episcopal chair, wherein he used to teach the people, was still preserved, and had in veneration, when Eusebius wrote his history, which was in the former part of the fourth century after Christ. And though the Scriptures do not expressly mention his promotion, they give us many proofs of his being the head of the Church of Jerusalem, after the apostles began to leave that place. It is remarkable, that when, in the first five chapters of the Acts, Peter is constantly spoken of as the chief apostle, and the principal person in the Church of Jerusalem, there is nothing after that said of him which implies that character ; and from the twelfth chapter of that book, which is the first place wherein James is mentioned with any character of distinction, he is constantly described as the chief person at Jerusalem, even when Peter was present. For when Peter was delivered by the angel out of prison, he bid

some of his disciples “Go show these things (that is, what had befallen himself) to James (as the head of the Church), and the brethren;” that is, the rest of the Church. Again, when Paul arrived at Jerusalem from his travels in preaching the Gospel to foreign countries, being desirous to give an account of the success which God had given him, “the day following he went in unto James (as the bishop of that place), and all the elders (who were next in authority to him) were present.” In the synod which was held at Jerusalem, about the great question, whether the converts from Gentilism should be circumcised, Peter delivers his judgment as one who was a member of the assembly; but James speaks with authority, and his sentence is decisive. The name of James is placed by St. Paul before Peter and John—James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars. And some of the Church of Jerusalem, who came to Antioch, are said to be “certain who came from James;” which implies that James was the head of that Church, otherwise they should rather have been said to come from Jerusalem, or from the Church of that place.

From all this together it plainly appears, that the Church of Jerusalem was under the particular care and government of St. James. The Scriptures give us no account what became of the greatest part of the other apostles, nor of the Churches founded by them; neither do they inform us whether the several provinces where they preached the Gospel—as Andrew is said to have done in Scythia; Thomas and Bartholomew in India; Simon in Africa; and others in other countries—were assigned by the immediate command of the Holy Spirit, or of any other apostle, or by an agreement among themselves, or whether every apostle followed his own private judgment and inclination in the choice of the country where he would exercise his office. But, if we may judge of the rest by what we find of St. Paul, it is certain they were directed by the Holy Spirit, or by their own judgment, and exercised the authority which our Lord gave them, without any dependence on Peter, or any other apostle.

For we find that St. Paul, whose authority was questioned by some of the Judaizing Christians, as was before observed, does everywhere assert his independency on all others, but Christ. He not only affirms that he received his commission neither of men, nor by man—that is, neither from men, as the first authors of it, nor by their choice or designation—but from Jesus Christ, who personally appeared to him for this purpose; but he tells us farther, that “the Gospel of uncircumcision was committed to him, as the Gospel of circumcision was to Peter;” that is, as Peter was, by the direction of our Lord and the Holy Spirit,

sent to preach chiefly to the Jews; so himself, by the same direction and authority, was ordered to preach to the Gentiles: on which account he calls himself in other places the “apostle of the Gentiles.” And he expressly affirms, that though he went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and it may be to be owned and declared an apostle, to silence those who denied his authority, yet he exercised his office without any instructions or authority from any person but Christ. And he was so far from depending on Peter, that, when Peter dissembled with the Jews, he publicly reprovèd him, and withstood him to the face.

I hope it fully appears that all the apostles were invested with equal authority to govern the Christian Church, and that every one of them exercised this authority by virtue of his commission from Christ, without depending on any other. But, before the conclusion of this argument, in order to a more clear knowledge of the method which they observed in governing the Church, these three things may be remembered.

First, that, after their dispersion from Jerusalem, particular apostles still remained subject to the apostolic college, when all or any number of them met, in the same manner as they had been whilst they lived together. An instance of this we find in the forementioned synod of Jerusalem, where a general decree was framed for the use of other Churches.

Secondly, that every apostle exercised a particular authority over the Churches which he had planted. This is the reason of the difference between such of St. Paul’s Epistles as were written to Churches converted by himself, and those to others. To the former he writes in a style of command and authority; but in these last he only exhorts, and persuades, and entreats. Thus, in his Epistles to the Corinthians, he asserts his own particular authority over them, exclusive of all others, which he grounds on his having converted them: “As my beloved sons I warn you.”

Thirdly, every apostle had a general concern for the whole Church of Christ, as well as those parts of it which himself had converted. This appears from the before-mentioned Epistles of St. Paul to the Romans, and other Churches, which had never seen him. After this, Paul and Peter, coming to Rome, ordained the first bishop there. And in other Churches, which had been converted by evangelists and others of the lower orders of ministers, the apostles ordained ministers, conferred the Holy Ghost, and were submitted to by all Christians, when they happened to come thither: which was before observed of the Church in Samaria, converted by Philip the deacon, and that of Antioch converted by other Christians scattered from Jerusalem. And in Churches converted by apostles, inferior ministers were not

only subject to the apostle by whom they had been converted, but to all other apostles who visited them. Thus we find that, after St. Paul's martyrdom, St. John took upon him to govern the Church of Ephesus, and others thereabouts, which had been first planted by St. Paul.

III. Having seen in what manner the apostles governed the Christian Church, let us now enquire what ministers were employed under them, which was the last part of our present subject. And here the candid and impartial reader will not expect so full and distinct an account of the ministers who assisted the apostles in governing the Church, and of their several offices, as may be given of those who lived in the succeeding ages, chiefly for these reasons—

1. Because many of the ministers who lived in the age of the apostles were extraordinary persons, whose ministrations are not always easy to be distinguished from those of the ordinary offices of the Church, or from one another. We are told, that "God hath set some in his Church, first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." In which place it is certain that different orders of ministers are described, some of which did not only excel others in the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, but also had authority to govern them; because the first order is that of apostles, to whom all other Christians, of what rank soever, were subject: and it is scarce to be doubted, that prophets and teachers, who are mentioned as next under the apostles, were distinct orders of ministers, they being everywhere through the Acts and Epistles distinguished from one another; or that the gifts of healing, with the rest which follow, were rather extraordinary graces of the Spirit, imparted both to the three forementioned orders of apostles, prophets, and teachers, and also in some degree to other Christians, than distinct offices. Thus again we are told, that "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers:" where it is probable, that beside apostles, who had authority over all other orders, two orders of different kinds are spoken of—in one kind are prophets and evangelists; in another, pastors and teachers, who seem not to have had so high a degree of inspiration as the prophets and evangelists; and it is plain, through the Acts and Epistles, that prophets and pastors were of a higher order than evangelists and teachers. So that by this interpretation there were two distinct orders of a different kind, and a third order of apostles superior to them both. But then it is not easy to give a distinct and certain account what were the particular offices of these persons, and which of them

were extraordinary and temporary, and which designed for the constant and lasting use of the Church, since the Scriptures do not speak clearly, and learned men have differed in their judgments about them.

2. Another reason why so clear and distinct an account ought not to be expected of the ministers of this age, as of those which follow, is, that the historical parts of the New Testament are very short, and many times relate nothing farther than the first plantation of Churches; and most of the Epistles were sent to Churches lately converted, where no standing ministers were settled. One qualification for a bishop was, that he should not be a novice, that is, one newly converted—time being required to prove men, before they could be entrusted with the care of the Church.

3. It may be farther considered, that most of the Epistles being written to persons lately converted from Judaism or Heathenism, their chief design is to instruct them in the principles of Christianity, or to arm them against false teachers: but there was no occasion to speak anything concerning the form of Church government, which the apostles either kept in their own hands, or committed to persons chosen by themselves, as Paul did that of Ephesus to Timothy, and that of Crete to Titus; but only in general terms to put them in mind to be obedient to those who laboured among them in the ministry. So that it would be very unreasonable to expect any distinct account of the offices and orders of the Christian ministers in these parts of the New Testament.

However, this is plain, from the short account which the Scriptures have given us of those times, that in most places there were two orders under the apostles, either of standing and fixed, or of extraordinary and inspired teachers.

1. And, first of all, if we look into the Church of Jerusalem, beside the twelve apostles, who lived there, and governed the Church together for some time, and James, the fixed bishop, we shall find seven deacons, who were solemnly ordained by the apostles. And though the particular occasion of their ordination was to distribute the public charity, which was one part of the deacon's office in the ages next after this, yet they were ministers of the word, as well as ministers of tables: whence it was required, as a previous qualification, that they should be "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." And presently after their ordination, Stephen, the first deacon, publicly preached the Gospel, confuted the unbelieving Jews, and wrought miracles, till he was put to death, through the malice of some, who "were not able to resist the spirit and wisdom by which he

spake." And afterwards we find Philip, the next after Stephen, preaching and baptizing.

There is hitherto no mention of presbyters in this Church, but all things are managed by the joint authority of the apostles, who still remained at Jerusalem, when the rest were dispersed into foreign parts, upon the persecution which arose about Stephen. But as it was before observed that James was appointed the fixed apostle or bishop of Jerusalem before the apostles left it, so there was a college of presbyters ordained about the same time. This is not expressly mentioned in the Acts, any more than the election of James; but it is remarkable, that as the first time James is mentioned with any character of distinction is in the twelfth chapter of that book, so the presbyters are first spoken of in the last verse of the eleventh chapter; and they are there mentioned in such a manner as plainly shows them to be concerned in the care of the Church: for Paul and Barnabas are said to bring the charitable collections of the Church of Antioch, for the relief of the brethren in Judea, to them. And whereas till this time, even to the first verse of this chapter, there is no mention of any, beside apostles and brethren, except the deacons, in the sixth chapter; henceforward the elders are constantly spoken of, sometimes with the apostles, and sometimes only with James, their bishop, as men of authority in this Church. Thus we are told that the disciples came from Antioch to Jerusalem, to consult with the apostles and elders whether the converts from heathenism ought to be circumcised. These disciples are said to be received by the apostles and elders. Afterwards we find that the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. When the controversy was decided, "it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men to Antioch." Where the same difference is made between the elders and the church, as between the apostles and elders: and the decree which was then enacted runs in the name of the "apostles, elders, and brethren." In the next chapter, the same decree is said to be "ordained by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem," without mentioning the rest of the Church. Afterwards, when St. Paul, who had been preaching the Gospel in foreign parts, returned to Jerusalem, being desirous to give an account "what things God had wrought by his ministry among the Gentiles," the day following he went in unto James, all the elders being present—James as the chief, the elders as next under him, pastors of the Church in that place: which is the more remarkable, because in other places, where there were yet no fixed pastors, he did not go in, as here he is said to do, to particular men, but called

the Church together to him. Thus Paul and Barnabas are said to have done at Antioch: "When they were come thither, and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles: and they abode there a long time," not with the elders, or any other Church officers, who were not yet ordained, but "with the disciples." From this time there was no farther occasion to mention the presbyters of the Church of Jerusalem in the Acts; but if the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to the Jews in Judea, as Chrysostom and others have thought, then it is not to be doubted but that they are included in the rulers, who are thrice mentioned in one chapter of that epistle, and to whom the people are exhorted to be obedient, and to submit themselves.

2. From the Church of Jerusalem let us go to that of Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians. Here the Gospel was first preached by some who left Jerusalem upon the persecution which arose about Stephen; tidings hereof being brought to the Church of Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas to confirm them in the faith, and he fetched Saul from Tarsus to help him in that work. Saul had been before called to be an apostle by Christ, who personally appeared to him; but neither he nor Barnabas were yet owned to be apostles by the Church, nor are they called by that name: so that hitherto there were only two orders of ministers in this Church, namely, those by whom the Antiochians had been converted, who probably were of the lowest order, with Saul and Barnabas, and perhaps some others of the second order—we find them distinguished by the names of prophets and teachers. Afterward these inspired men were commanded by the Holy Ghost to set apart Saul and Barnabas for the work to which he had called them, that is, to preach to the Gentiles: which being done by imposition of hands, with solemn prayer and fasting, Saul is thenceforward called Paul, his name being changed with his character, and both he and Barnabas have constantly the title of apostles. So that here again, though no standing and ordinary pastors seem yet to have been ordained in this Church, there are plainly three distinct orders of ministers—apostles, prophets, and teachers.

3. From these two primitive Churches let us pass to the history of St. Paul's travels, which almost wholly takes up the remaining part of the Acts. And here again we shall find a manifest distinction between the orders of ministers. In the beginning of his travels, when Barnabas accompanied him, John, whose surname was Mark, attended on them as their minister, or deacon. This person was an evangelist, or teacher, as we

learn from several passages in St. Paul's Epistles; yet he being of the lowest order of ministers, the two apostles are all along described as principals in the business they went about: whence Sergius Paulus, the deputy governor of Paphos, being desirous to hear the word of God, is said to call for Paul and Barnabas, without any mention of Mark;—which is the more to be observed, because when any of the second order are joined with the apostles, they are spoken of as their associates, and not their ministers. This plainly appears concerning the elders of Jerusalem, who are all along mentioned as copartners with James in the care of the Church; and the same will farther appear from that which comes now to be related.

When Paul parted from Barnabas, he took with him Silas or Silvanus. This man was a prophet, and is so called in this history, and by consequence was of the order next to that of apostles. Afterwards Paul admitted some others into his company, and particularly Timotheus. Timotheus was an evangelist, and preached the Gospel to the Corinthians, as St. Paul affirms; but he did minister as a deacon to St. Paul. So that now there were in this company an apostle, a prophet, and an evangelist or deacon. When these are mentioned together, it is constantly in this order—Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus; Silvanus being superior to Timothy, as Paul was to Silvanus. And the two former are all along, in the Acts, described as principals in preaching the Gospel and planting Churches: which is agreeable to what St. Paul tells the Ephesians, and in them other Churches, that they are “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone;” making the prophets to be the fellows and copartners of the apostles in the foundation of the Christian Church. Hence Paul and Silas only were apprehended at Philippi, as being the chief persons; though Timothy was said to be taken into their company, in the beginning of the chapter where this is related. In the next chapter we find them all three together; yet the disciples at Thessalonica are there said to consort with Paul and Silas: and afterwards Paul and Silas are sent away by night, without any mention of Timothy, who, being only their deacon or minister, may be supposed to be included as one of the company, when they on whom he attended are spoken of. And it is probable there were at the same time several other evangelists and deacons of lesser note in this company, whose names are not set down, and particularly Luke, the writer of this history, who in the chapter before speaks of St. Paul's company in the first person: “The Lord (saith he) called us to preach the Gospel in Macedonia;” and

the same is done several times in the following verses, yet no man is mentioned by name but Paul and Silas. And in other places, where Paul only is mentioned, having then no apostle or prophet with him, there were several other ministers in his company. Thus, in the first twenty verses of the nineteenth chapter of the same book, the planting and increase of the Church at Ephesus is entirely ascribed to St. Paul; whereas it is plain, that not only Timothy, but also Erastus, with others, who did attend on him as deacons, were there at the same time: for we find, in the twenty-second verse of this chapter, that, having determined to go into Macedonia, he sent thither before him two of those who ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus. So that in St. Paul's travels we constantly find several orders of ministers—sometimes apostles, with one or more deacons, as when Paul and Barnabas travelled with Mark; sometimes an apostle, prophet, and one or more deacons, as when Paul and Silas, with Timothy, and others of the lowest order, went together; sometimes an apostle, attended by his deacons only, as in the latter part of this history, in which none but Paul and his deacons are spoken of, there being no mention of Silas after the eighteenth chapter.

4. We may farther observe, that there are several other passages, both in the Acts and Epistles of the apostles, from which it is manifest, that in all places, which had been long enough converted to be formed into regular Churches, there were orders of standing and fixed ministers. Paul and Barnabas, returning to visit the Churches which they had lately planted, ordained elders in every Church. James, who writes to the twelve tribes, wherever scattered abroad, directs the “sick among them to send for the elders of the Church, to pray over them, and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.” So that in all places where the twelve tribes were dispersed, and that was all over the Roman empire, there were elders when this Epistle was written. There was a presbytery, or college of elders, in the place where Timothy was ordained; for it was by the imposition of their hands that he received his orders: yet this was not done without an apostle, and therefore the grace which, in the passage now cited, is conferred on him by the presbytery, in another place is said to have been given him by the imposition of St. Paul's hands. Peter, who writes to the “strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,” exhorts the elders to feed the flock of God, and the people to be obedient to their elders: and these elders are said to have the oversight (which is, to be bishops) of those Churches, and are spoken of as governors; whence he exhorts them not to

behave themselves as lords over the flock, but to be ensamples to it, as they were concerned to approve themselves to Christ, the chief Shepherd. St. Paul, having called the elders of Ephesus to Miletus, gives them a solemn charge to take care of the flock, "over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers," or bishops. So that here again are elders called bishops, and entrusted with the care of the Church. St. Paul tells Titus that he had left him in Crete to ordain elders in every city, and advises him to ordain none but such as are blameless; for which he gives this reason, that a bishop must be blameless, as being the steward of God. So that in all the cities of Crete there were to be elders, and they also seem to be called bishops, and to be entrusted with the government of God's Church, as his stewards and vicegerents. In the first Epistle to Timothy, elders are several times mentioned with characters of distinction from other Christians, whom they are said to rule. And rules are prescribed to Timothy, for his conduct in the ordination of bishops and deacons, one of which is this: "A bishop must be one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" So that here are deacons, and over them bishops, who rule and take care of the Church of God. But there are no rules for ordaining elders, unless they be comprehended in those which relate to bishops. Lastly, the Epistle to the Philippians is directed to the "bishops, deacons, and saints" at Philippi: whence it is manifest, that here also, beside the Christian people, who are called saints, as they are in other places, there were two orders of ministers, distinguished by the names of bishops and deacons.

From these passages of Scripture it is evident, beyond all dispute, that, beside the apostles, there were, in this first age of the Church, at least two orders of fixed and standing ministers, namely, that of bishops and elders, with another of deacons. But it has been disputed, whether the bishops, who are called presbyters in some of the forementioned texts, and in others joined with deacons only, were all of the order next above deacons; and the same with those, who, in the following ages, were distinguished by the name of presbyters, from a superior order of bishops, or whether they were of an order above that of mere presbyters.

I will not take upon me to decide this controversy, which has exercised the pens of so many wise and learned men; but only shall suggest a few things, which I shall leave to the judgment of the impartial reader.

First, then, it does not follow that all presbyters were of the same order with bishops, because bishops are sometimes included in the name of presbyters. The apostles themselves were undoubtedly presbyters, and are sometimes so called: St. John calls himself a presbyter, both in his second and third Epistle; and St. Peter styles himself a fellow-presbyter of the presbyters, to whom his first Epistle was directed: but we must not conclude from hence that all presbyters were apostles. For though all the power of presbyters belonged to the apostles, and therefore they may well be called presbyters, there were several powers exercised by the apostles which never belonged to any mere presbyter. In like manner, in the Jewish Church, there was an high priest, under him priests of an inferior order, and a third order of Levites below both the former; yet in several ancient authors, who do expressly in other places distinguish the high priest from the inferior order of priests, all the three orders are comprehended under the two names of Priests and Levites. The reason whereof is plainly this, that though the priests were not high priests, nor ever dignified with that title, or the office annexed to it; yet the high priest was a true and proper priest, and could lawfully discharge any part of the sacerdotal office. And thus, in Clemens of Alexandria, we find all the ministers of the Christian Church contained under the two names of presbyters and deacons; and yet in other places he speaks of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as three distinct orders.

Secondly, it cannot be proved that the forementioned texts of Scripture, where the names of bishops and presbyters are used promiscuously, do not relate to ministers of the highest order. In the Epistle of St. Peter, and that of Paul to Titus, where several cities are spoken of, why may not the bishops and elders respect the several bishops who presided in each of those cities? There is a greater appearance of difficulty when they who governed the Church of Ephesus, or of Philippi, are called in the plural bishops; because this rule was held sacred in all ages, that in one city there should only be one bishop, or chief pastor; and therefore, if it can be made out that these bishops lived together in either of those cities, I shall readily allow that they were mere presbyters. But since all Asia, that is, Natolia, had before that time received the Gospel by St. Paul's preaching, when he lived almost three years together at Ephesus, how can it be proved that he did not send to all the bishops of the country thereabouts, as well as to him who ruled the particular Church of Ephesus? And if so, the bishops of Ephesus may mean all the bishops who presided in the cities within that dis-

trict. And though I will not say the bishops at Philippi were the bishops of the district thereabouts, who were under the Metropolitan of Philippi, as some learned men have done—because it does not appear that Philippi was then a Metropolitan Church; and it is well known that afterwards Thessalonica, and not Philippi, was the metropolis of Macedonia—yet why may not the bishops, to whom this Epistle was directed, be some bishops of the neighbouring cities, who assembled on some special occasion at Philippi? Or, if this will not be allowed, how can it be proved that this was not a circular Epistle, like those to the Ephesians and Colossians, which, though first sent to Philippi, was designed for the use of other Churches in Macedonia? And if so, the bishops here mentioned were those who governed these Churches.

Thirdly, it may be, that when some Churches were first established, they had only a bishop, with deacons to minister, without any presbyters. We find that St. Paul was sometimes accompanied by persons of the higher orders, and sometimes by none but deacons. And it is very possible, that in Churches where the disciples were so few, that they could all assemble in one place, there might be no Church officer to perform the duties of religion beside the bishop and his deacons; and that afterwards, as the numbers of Christians increased, the bishop ordained presbyters, who should officiate in the congregations where he could not be personally present, and assist him in other parts of his pastoral charge. And if this was so, we need not wonder why bishops and deacons are sometimes mentioned without any order between them.

Fourthly, it may be, that when St. Paul delivers rules for the ordination of bishops and deacons, without mentioning the intermediate order of presbyters, he included these last in the rules which concern bishops; because presbyters are ordained to a sort of copartnership in the pastoral or episcopal charge, and, excepting the imposition of hands in confirmation and ordination, there is scarce any act which presbyters may not exercise as well as bishops: so that the rules which are laid down for bishops might serve for presbyters. This was the opinion of Chrysostom, Oecumenius, and Hilary the deacon; and if it be true, we need enquire no farther why the same rules are given for the ordination of bishops and presbyters in St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, or why bishops and deacons are spoken of in the third chapter of his first Epistle to Timothy, without any mention of mere presbyters.

Lastly, though we should allow that the names of bishop and presbyter did in that age signify the same office, as some Fathers

of the fourth century seem to have thought ; and farther, that all the bishops spoken of in the forementioned texts of Scripture were mere presbyters, and of the next order above deacons, which is the utmost concession that can be desired ; hence it plainly appears, that in this age there were three distinct orders of ministers in the Church, namely, that of deacons, another of presbyters, and over them a superior order, in which were not only the apostles, but also Timothy and Titus, who governed the Churches in which they resided, when the above-mentioned Epistles were written to them. Or if it should be denied that Timothy and Titus were governors of these Churches, yet it must be granted, that the apostle who gave them a commission to ordain ministers, and to set things in order there, had then the care of the Churches in his own hands. And hence it follows, that there was an apostle, with presbyters and deacons at the same time ; which is all we are obliged at present to make out. And it appears the Philippians still remained under St. Paul's government when he sent this Epistle to them, in which mention is made of their bishops and deacons, from his taking maintenance from them. This was an ordinance of our Saviour's own appointment, that "they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel," as St. Paul affirms : and though sometimes that apostle refrained from using this power over his disciples, when it was like to be made an objection against his preaching, yet he fully asserts his right to exercise it in all places, where the care of the Church was incumbent on him. And therefore, since it appears, from his Epistle to the Philippians, that he took maintenance of them at the time when it was written, we may reasonably conclude that they were then under his government ; and the same has already been proved in the former part of this chapter by other arguments. So that in this Church also, allowing their bishops to have been simple presbyters, there was an apostle, with presbyters and deacons.

From what has been said, I hope it will fully appear, to every impartial reader, that in the times of the apostles there were three distinct orders of ministers, by whom the Christian Church was governed. And here we may observe, how the government of the Christian Church, which is the mystical Israel, was typified in the literal Israel, the chief priest whereof, with his priests and Levites, exactly represented the Christian apostles, presbyters, and deacons ; whereby the prediction of Isaiah was accomplished, that "God would declare his glory to all nations, and take out of them priests and Levites."

APPENDIX.

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE polity of the Jews was a perfect theocracy, or divine law, emanating immediately from the mouth of Jehovah, and containing many moral precepts and ritual observances, for the regular enforcement and discharge of which there were instituted and ordained, by the hand of Moses, two kinds of ministerial authority, the sacerdotal and the presbyteral: the one, being designed for the due execution of all the statutes and judgments, as well of those which appertained to the ecclesiastical, as of those which belonged to the civil part of their constitution, was placed in the hands of the presbyters; the other, being intended for the rightful discharge of the service of the sanctuary, was left to be exercised by the priests and the Levites. For the functions of the priesthood, and its dignified appendages, the family of Aaron, together with the whole tribe of Levi, were set apart and sanctified; and to their posterity alone was the lawful discharge of the sacerdotal office solemnly and exclusively committed. But with respect to the presbyters, whose duty and business it was to put in force the whole code of the Jewish law, they might be of any tribe or family whatever, provided that they were of competent learning, and of due weight with the people: nor is it at all to be doubted, but that under the second temple, at least, many of these would be chosen from the sacerdotal order, who, from the sanctity of their occupation, and their consequent superiority of legal knowledge, would justly acquire a pre-eminence of station above the rest of their countrymen.

The next thing to be considered is, from which of these two platforms of the Jewish theocracy the regimen of the primitive Church was borrowed and derived. That it could not have been any imitation of their sacerdotal institution, is apparent from this, that the priests of the temple were the priests of Jesus Christ, and of all his disciples that dwelt in Judea; to whom, so long as the sanctuary stood, it was not lawful to dispense with its service, much less to establish a second hierarchy in opposition to that which had been constituted by Moses. Indeed, we know for certain that the first Christian converts, at Jerusalem, were extremely tenacious of every rite and ceremony of the law; that, in particular, St. James, the head of that Church, never forsook the temple, but strictly lived up to every rule and ordinance, and was held even by the Jews themselves in the highest esteem; not surely for his defection from the law of Moses, not yet for his having usurped, in the society over which he presided, the prerogatives of the family of Aaron; but, as common sense must suggest to us, for having walked in all the ordinances of the Lord blamelessly, in the full and uniform discharge of every precept of Judaism. But if it would have been highly criminal in the first disciples to have forsaken the service of the sanctuary, or by any institution of their own to have superseded the necessity of the Aaronic priesthood, seeing that there was a regularly organized and well-governed society of Christians at Jerusalem, at least thirty or forty years before the destruction of the temple, there seems no other alternative left than that the primitive regimen of the Church must have been a close imitation of the Jewish presbyteral bench; and that this was the fact, will appear evident to the least discerning, if we once take into consideration the origin and form of the authority of which that bench was possessed.

The institution of the Jewish presbytery, equally with that of the Aaronic priesthood, descended immediately from God, through the instrumentality of Moses. For the Lord commanded Moses to select seventy of the elders of Israel, and to bring them into his presence, and that, by the imposition of hands, he would take of the Spirit which was upon himself, and transfer it unto them, so that they might share the charge of governing with him: which thing was accordingly done. From this beginning arose the great council or sanhedrim of the Jewish people; and, though we read but little of its history during either of the two temples, the tradition of the Fathers is, that it thus continued in an uninterrupted succession of presbyters down from the days of

Moses to the commencement of the second captivity, and to their total expulsion from the holy land. That it existed under the second temple, we need appeal to no other records than those of the New Testament. The king, when reigning, formed no part of this great council. Its authority was absolute and supreme in all causes whatsoever, ecclesiastical as well as civil; and from the stroke of its sentence there lay no appeal. Its seat, after that the people were finally settled in Palestine, was at Jerusalem, in a conclave close by the temple, where all capital crimes were obliged to be taken cognizance of. The number of its presbyters was seventy and one, like unto that in the days of Moses, whose personal power and authority, always, the president of the bench was supposed to inherit.

Besides the supreme sanhedrim, there were likewise at Jerusalem other two inferior sanhedrims, each consisting of twenty-three presbyters; and so in all the cities of Judea, where there were upwards of a hundred and twenty adult Jews, there was established, with the permission of the supreme court, a like sanhedrim of twenty and three—not to mention the petty sanhedrims of three or five, for the adjustment of minor disputes, and the imposing of fines. To all these inferior benches the authoritative determinations of points of law descended from the great sanhedrim in the conclave; and in all difficulties and uncertainties the usage of these courts was to refer, first, to one or both of the inferior sanhedrims at Jerusalem, in the order in which they came to them; and if neither of these could decide according to precedent, then to the supreme council of seventy and one, whose decision was absolute. Moreover, in every city, where there was established the inferior sanhedrim of twenty and three, there were likewise formed two classes of students of the law, and of candidates for the presbytery, each class consisting of twenty-three in number; from which the vacancies in the bench, occasioned by death or other causes, were always supplied; and from which, too, in case of any disagreement of opinion, the council was enabled to augment its number of voices, even to seventy and one; beyond which, however, it was not lawful to proceed.

In all these councils or sanhedrims, in the inferior as well as in the superior, there was of necessity a *head of the see*, or the president of the bench, whose prerogative it was, by the imposition of hands, and in company with others, to ordain to the presbyterate; and without whose presence and special direction the sanhedrim was not authorized to proceed to the discharge of its functions. To his judgment and opinion the highest deference was always paid; and though he could not go against an absolute majority of the presbytery, yet he could augment the council, and try the effect of a greater number of voices. In case, therefore, of his removal by death, or other just cause, the first step was to supply the vacancy in the chair by a fit and competent successor. In the supreme council at Jerusalem, the high priest, I believe, was usually enthroned and constituted the president; but at other times, in the appointment to this dignity, no regard was had to family distinctions.

In advancing a presbyter to the honour of being president, or the head of the see, I am not aware of any other ceremony being observed than that of the whole presbytery placing him in the chair or throne; but to ordain or promote a candidate to the rank of a presbyter, it was necessary that the head of the see, in company with other two, should impose hands on him expressly by name, should pronounce him worthy of the degree of a presbyter, and give him the authority to execute that function. Maimonides, indeed, is of opinion that it was quite sufficient to pronounce him a rabbi, or a presbyter, and that the ceremony of the imposition of hands was generally dispensed with; but there is room to call in question the accuracy of his assertion, as the lawful and solemn manner of conferring ordination most unquestionably was by the imposition of hands. It is likewise most certain, that in all ordinations the presence of three was necessary; the only recorded instance to the contrary being in the case of R. Jehuda ben Bava, who, at a time of the most bitter persecution, ordained, with his own hands, four or five presbyters; and thereby preserved the succession of the presbyterate unbroken and entire.—*Oxlee's Sermon on the Christian Priesthood.*

PREFACE.

WE have now advanced into the regions of controversy. The marks of the Church (which will in another place be discussed) are not themselves the subjects of dispute, so much as the ulterior question—what communion is that which possesses them? We shall now turn to the apostolical succession, and shall in this Preface attempt to demonstrate—not its truth, that we leave for the Tracts, but its importance; this being, in fact, the reason of our selecting the subject. It may at first seem of small moment whether it be proved or not; and there are many who boldly assert that it cannot be proved at all. We shall here, however, assume the fact (which the reader will find amply demonstrated in the following Tracts), viz., that the apostles bestowed the power of ordination *only* on certain individuals; that they, in turn, conferred a similar power only on certain others; and that the functions—the right to exercise which was thus conferred—could not lawfully be exercised by any, save those thus ordained. This, then, is the assumption which we make—the assumption of the apostolical succession. We will first suppose the assumption to be granted. It follows, therefore, that all ministers of religion, who cannot trace their spiritual descent to the apostles, are intruders upon other men's ground; that they are uncalled by God—are guilty of grievous sin in assuming powers to which they are not entitled—and that those who communicate with them, exclusively owning them as spiritual guides, are themselves self-excommunicated, and have neither sacraments nor ministry.

Moreover, it follows, that as without baptism and the eucharist no man, *who has access to them*, can be a Christian at all, that such persons have no right to the Christian name, and ought rather to take the name of their self-chosen spiritual leader. Yet again, if spiritual blessings be conveyed in the sacraments, those who do not receive those sacraments cannot lay claim to such blessings; and hence, legally speaking, he who shuts himself out of an Apostolic Church gives up at once both the right to the name and the claim to the privileges of a

Christian; *e. g.*, if the Church, established in this country, be in possession of the apostolical succession in the sense we have above given of it, then none who dissent from her are Christians. We have, in all this, nothing to do with the apparent harshness of the conclusion; all we are concerned with, is to see that it is legitimately drawn from true premises. We would not attempt to make any man a Christian by violence; for if he chooses to reject the Gospel, or any part of the Gospel, he has, not indeed the right to do so, but the right to claim freedom from any violence on our part. The inquisition never made one convert, though it made many hypocrites; and if we *cannot*, by the force of our arguments, and the goodness of our example, win our brother, we must put up a prayer to our Father for him, and leave him to his own choice. But we will now reverse the picture, and endeavour to ascertain the consequences, if the apostolical succession be successfully denied. This may be done in two ways: first, by denying that the apostles ever confined the powers of ordination to bishops; or of administering the sacraments to bishops and priests; or of performing the services of religion in the Church to bishops, priests, and deacons: and, secondly, by admitting that the apostles did so, but that the succession has been lost, and that we consequently are free from any obligations that it might lay upon us. These will act differently on the theory at first, but at a certain point they amount to the same thing. Let it be imagined, then, that the apostolical succession was really lost: it would follow that all ministers of the Gospel must be what Dissenters call “men-made ministers;” that is, persons who, by the judgment of men, have been appointed to the cure of souls: for though the Independent might be at once driven to acknowledge the fact, that he was “set apart” by men who had no *peculiar* right vested in themselves as individuals, and that they derived their right solely from the will of the “*Church* ;” yet the clergyman would be driven to an equally untenable position when the enquirer had reached the broken link in the chain. Consequently all, who minister about religion, being thus equal in authority, it would evidently be a matter of not the smallest moment whether the individual had a piece of an apostolic succession or not: each

congregation, therefore, would have a right to ordain their own pastor—any number of men the right to make any number of ministers. But as numbers, *i.e.*, the number of ordaining persons, make no part of ordination, save as a custom of the Church, we deduce, next, the fact that any one who pleased may ordain himself. If it be said that God calls, by an inward calling, those whom he intends to minister in his Church, let it be replied, first, that the Church cannot say to *any* individual, who should profess such calling, that he is making a false profession, inasmuch as she cannot read his heart: this, therefore, cannot be a matter either of evidence or discipline. But, secondly, the claim itself amounts to *absolute inspiration*, if it be any more than a conviction of fitness, and a determination to serve God by every lawful means. We must pause here, for we see clearly that there is such a thing as serving God by *unlawful means*, as those did who preached Christ of contention, thinking to add affliction to Paul's bonds. To return, then, to our subject: it would be lawful for any one, who thought himself fit, to ordain himself: and as this self-ordination would be quite as apostolical as that by two, three, or more persons, even though they themselves had received ordination of a similar kind; so also it follows that there could be no such thing as either heresy or schism; for doubtless every founder of a Church, having appointed himself to be its pastor, would be both entitled and bound to explain the Scriptures as he himself understood them. If any individual attempted to interfere with this right, it would but be arraying private judgment against private judgment; and if a multitude interfered, it would as unquestionably be the unjust act of "a tyrant majority." Thus, then, as no one man has a right to condemn, *on his own authority*, the religious opinions of another, and as there would, under the above imagined system, be no body of men, no set of writings, no era of time, which could be taken as a standard to try those opinions, we come at once to the conclusion, that they could not lawfully be tried at all; and, so far as *men* can distinguish it, heresy must be a mere name. In like manner it may be shown that schism must also be a mere name; for where any man may ordain himself and make his own creed, there can, properly speaking, be no visible Church, save that

which Dissenters in our days acknowledge, and which embraces every person who chooses to say that he is a Christian. It would, of course, be idle to talk of the *discipline* of a Church so constituted. Again, with regard to the sacraments, that of baptism we shall not now touch upon ; but any person giving any other person bread and wine, might assume, and assume rightly, that he or she was administering to such persons the eucharist. There could be no valid objection also to female priests and female preachers ; for as each person might, in such a Church, interpret the Scriptures in his own way, so, if he chose to assert that the supposed prohibition of female teaching was misunderstood, there would be none who would have any right to interfere either with his principles or practice—none who would have the right even to say with authority, you are wrong ! In a word, there could be no discipline—no authorized standard of interpretation—no distinct qualification for the sacred office—no reciprocal rights and duties between minister and people—no security against false doctrine, heresy, and schism. The matter in dispute, stripped of all the *ad captandum* phraseology of interested disputants, is simply this :—Is the sacred office to be conferred by God or by man ? If by God, then we are bound not to take it for granted that every man, who says he is called by God, is really so ; but to ascertain in what way God makes known his choice of mortal instruments, so that the choice may be known to others besides the objects of it : and this we can only do by recurring to the days of the primitive Church ; inasmuch as, since that period, we have had no new revelations. Now the mode in which God has been pleased to deal with man has been ever the same, and we may always argue, that if at one period the principles of his government were such and such, that in a parallel case they will be the same, and in a nearly parallel case similar.

The priesthood, among the Jews, was hereditary, and the sacrifice had its invariable effect, *ex opere operato* ; that is, certain blessings were necessarily connected with the rite, and were necessarily conferred, however wicked the priest, or however worldly the votary. We do not mean that no additional blessing was conferred on the *pious* worshipper, but that certain blessings

were connected with the outward act of obedience ; which, therefore, fell to the share of all who performed the outward act. The principle of this was, doubtless, that God would himself be worshipped, to the exclusion of instruments ; that his ordinances were as effectual from the hands of Eli's sons, as from those of Eli's self : and, lest the Israelites should lose sight of this fact, the priesthood was not bestowed by popular election on the supposed most worthy. No one, in the days of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, would have dared to say that "*the people had right to choose their minister ;*" but it was conferred by divine appointment on the members of a particular family, whether worthy or not. The priest was the channel of communication between God and his people. Surely, if it *were* necessary for the people's salvation that this channel should be holy in itself, the people were not qualified to choose it ; for they had no power of ascertaining whether the individual be spiritually holy or not. If, on the other hand, it be *not* necessary, then the people can have no interest in choosing their channel of communication. But, in the case of the Jews, they were not called on to decide, for God himself interposed, and announced, by his choice of an hereditary priesthood, his entire independence both on the gifts and graces of men. Now if this was the principle of God's Church government under a covenant of works—works on one hand, promise on the other—much more should we expect it to be the case now, under a covenant of *grace* and fulfilment. If the type were so efficacious that not all the wickedness of those who administered could invalidate its inherent virtues, surely the great Anti-type is not less so ; if the Mosaic sacrifices were not vitiated by the atrocities of Eli's sons, neither can the Christian sacraments by the depravities of any officiating priest. Much rests on this argument, and, almost self-evident as it is, we shall venture to give it at somewhat greater length. Let it be supposed that a congregation were dependent for any, even the slightest spiritual blessing, upon the personal religion of their minister, then, perhaps, the most pious persons would suffer for the hypocrisy of the most depraved—a state of circumstances not to be imagined for a moment. Since, then, (for the argument on the other side cannot be maintained)

the piety or impiety of the officiating priest does neither increase nor lessen the value of God's ordinances to his people, piety can be no proof that an individual is called, nor the want of it any proof that he is not called, to the work of the ministry ; and if not piety, surely not knowledge, or eloquence, or aptness to teach, or any other ministerial gift. But, in order to avoid any ambiguity, let us remark that a call to the ministry is twofold ; the one as regards the individual—the other as regards the Church : these *ought* to coincide in every case, though, alas ! they do not. The call, as regards the individual, is, when he himself, being the subject of spiritual conversion, is persuaded, in his own mind, that it is his duty to preach the Gospel ; and, acting under this persuasion, he take the steps, whatever they may be, which are necessary to bring him under the notice of those who have the power of appointing him. The call, as regards the Church, is when Providence, having opened a way into the ministry for any individual, the governors of the Church, deeming him a fit person, lay their hands upon him, and separate him for the work of the Gospel. Now these two ought, as we have before remarked, in every case, to coincide : but, first, there are, alas ! many who take or accept the holy office with purely secular views ; and, secondly, there are many who have a large admixture of worldliness in their motives, even though they do determine to perform, to the best of their ability, the duties which devolve upon them. We must perforce, therefore, be content with such men as human investigation shall judge fitted ; and as the Dissenter can claim, no more than the Churchman, the gift of direct inspiration, we have only, so far as *fitness* is concerned, to decide between the qualifications, on the one hand, of a bishop and his chaplain, archdeacon, chancellor, &c. ; and, on the other, of the lay, perhaps trading, elders of an Independent congregation, or of a company of similarly ordained Dissenting teachers, as judges of ministerial gifts and attainments. This, however, it will be observed, is making the question one merely of qualification ; and, of course, there are many who would profess to prefer those of the tradesman to those of the bishop. But the question to which we must ultimately turn is one of right ; and we must enquire

whether there are any class or condition of men who possess the exclusive *right* of appointing the ministers of Christ's Church. We have seen the importance of the question, and we shall now turn to the way in which an attempt has been made to meet it. Some have boldly denied both the phrase and the fact—apostolical succession; others have admitted the words, but maintained that the thing implied was a succession of apostolical doctrine; others have allowed it to be a succession of persons, but simply of good men, in all ages of the Church, who should bear witness to apostolical truth; while others again have gone the length of admitting it to be a succession of ordained men, and that a *connection* with this chain *was* necessary for ministers, but that episcopal ordination was *not* necessary. This last is the highest form of the Presbyterian system, claiming for its ministers an uninterrupted spiritual descent from the apostles—the earlier part by Episcopal, the latter by Presbyterian ordination. This same view, too, is maintained by some among the Wesleyan Methodists. The Church of Scotland, as by law established, is, say writers of this class, an Episcopal Church, *sede vacante*—the General Assembly is a collective Episcopacy. The same claim has been made for the Wesleyan conference; and so evident is the misgiving prevailing as to a Church without a bishop, that the American Methodists have, *in terms*, erected themselves into an Episcopal Church, and appointed bishops, without troubling themselves to enquire whether they had the right or not so to do. Hence the Scottish Presbyterian Church claims to have the Episcopacy without the bishop: the American Wesleyan communion has certainly the bishop without the Episcopacy. All these facts, which might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, show that men in general, whether they will allow it or not, are in their hearts persuaded that bishops are not human inventions, and that there is something in the primitive form of Church government essential to the very existence of a Church. Let us not be deemed uncharitable if we say that the true, and probably the only, reason that Dissent exists at all in a religious shape in this country, is to be found in that emphatic word, “the Dissenting *interest*.” Irreligion will exist; carelessness of Church censures will exist; practical self-excom-

munication will exist ; scorn and scoffing at all God's ordinances ; open, profligate, avowed infidelity—all these are to be expected as the fruits of the fall : but religious Dissent (for such a thing there is), the deliberate choice of a weak system instead of a strong one, the voluntary incurring the danger of heresy and schism, the giving up of many covenanted blessings—all which things *may* be true, and if not true, leave the system at least as promising as that which is taken up in its stead—this we do not believe to exist otherwise than through educational prejudice, founded on the “Dissenting interest.” We will briefly recapitulate. If there be not a succession of men, descending from the apostolic age, episcopally ordained, and to whom exclusively the right of performing the Church services belongs, and the administering the sacraments, as the power of ordination itself is confined to the bishops ; then the sacred office is free to any one who at any time chooses to assume it. Every man may administer to himself the sacraments, give himself absolution, hold what opinions he pleases, however heterodox, and teach others the same, without any man having a right to condemn him. Heresy, schism, discipline, excommunication, and even church itself, become mere empty names ; and every man, by divine right, his own church, his own bishop, his own priest, his own creed-maker, and his own interpreter. The Bible says to him whatever he pleases to make it say ; his own prejudices are the only standards to which he may appeal ; and, in case of his going wrong, his blood rests on his own head. It will be evident that the highest form of the Presbyterian system only puts off the consequences for another step ; for if Episcopal ordination be not necessary at one period, it cannot be at another ; and consequently *valid* ordination may be obtained on terms sufficiently easy to entail all the consequences above detailed, while in its more usual form they naturally follow at once.

C.

CAMBRIDGE,
The Feast of St. Matthew.

THE ERA OF THE CHURCH

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE APOSTLES.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. SAMUEL PARKER, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.

HAVING considered the state of the Church under the apostles, the next thing to be enquired into is, in what condition they left it, whether they bequeathed apostolical authority to single persons, or let it fall (like gavel-kind estates) to be equally divided among the whole body of presbyters, without any superiority of one above another; for there, we are wisely told, lies the seat of the controversy—whether the apostles upon their withdrawing from the government of Churches, did substitute single persons to succeed them; and if that could be made appear, all other things would speedily follow. But what if it cannot? It is, they say, then evident that they left it to the whole body of the presbyters, without any superior over them. But what is that evidence? Do we find any record that the Church was so governed after the apostles? No, but it was so for some time. But who knows that time? It was that unknown interval of time next and immediately after the apostles. Was it so? Then no man living knows any such time, and then there was none, for what is to us utterly unknown, is to us utterly nothing. But how long did this unknown time continue? Why about thirty-five years, not forty. Then that was not time enough to give them title by prescription. But how do we know that it lasted so long, and no longer? Blondel and Salmasius say so. What proof have they of it? They have arguments for it *ex intimo antiquitatis sinu*. But what are they? That is as unknown as the unknown time itself. Why then do they so positively affirm it? Because they are presbyterians of the right stamp, and therefore sworn and implacable enemies to the true primitive Christianity. But who altered this form of government, and where? If you ask who, that is as much in the dark as the unknown time; if where, the answer is ready: All the world over. What, did all the world meet in one place? Then that is the place: if they

did not, how could they agree all at once to make this universal change? So that we are as much at a loss where all this world lies, as when this unknown time was. But why did they abolish presbyterian parity, and set up episcopal superiority? To prevent schisms. What, then, could they not do it themselves? “No, (saith St. Jerome) by the working of the devil among the presbyters, they found it impossible.” And so it is plain to common sense that it was without the interposition of the devil, if we only consider the passions of human nature; and if ever the presbyters should fall out among themselves (a thing not to be avoided among equals), every man might perpetuate the quarrel for ever, by ordaining as many presbyters as he pleased, to increase his own faction. From hence, then, it follows—

First, that it is impossible to govern the Christian Church without bishops.

Secondly, that the presbyterians themselves were the first authors of episcopacy, because they found themselves unable to preserve peace in the Church without it.

Thirdly, that the apostles made no sufficient provision for it, but left it exposed to numberless schisms and divisions, as many as there are presbyters in the world.

Fourthly, that though the government of the Church was left, by our Saviour and his apostles, to the presbyters in common, yet it was never settled upon them by any grant or institution; and then, beside that they have no authority, because no commission, what need of all this fury and clamour for the restitution of a form of government, as if it stood upon divine right, when it is confessed that it was merely casual, and had no authority either from our Saviour or his apostles? And what if episcopacy itself were not established by divine right, yet seeing no other form was, to what purpose do men raise so many tumults against it, as antichristian, upon Blondel’s own principles? If there be no good in it, yet there is no harm; if we are not obliged to set it up, so neither are we to pull it down. And therefore why should he begin his Apology so tragically, by comparing the introduction of episcopacy with the primitive antichrists, and the heretics that denied our Saviour’s very incarnation, when, if it was not a divine institution itself, it is yet confessed, by the whole design of the Apology, that it did not thrust out anything that was? and then at worst it is but an indifferent thing.

Fifthly, that the presbyterian government is so far from being grounded upon any divine institution, that it had its beginning merely from apostolical negligence and stupidity.

Sixthly, that it was quickly found so extremely absurd, that they that set it up were themselves forced, by woful experience,

to lay it aside every where in less than forty years' trial. And now if they can satisfy themselves in this Apology, *pro sententiâ Hieronymi* (and it is all that either himself or Blondel makes), they are happy men, and long may they enjoy the pleasure of their opinion.

And yet, after all these surmises of an unknown time, unknown place, unknown persons, they are all known to be notoriously false; in that it is most certainly known that there was no such devolution as St. Jerome dreams of, but that they appointed single persons to succeed them in the government of all the known Churches in the world. As for the superiority of Timothy and Titus over the presbyters in the Churches of Ephesus and Crete, upon St. Paul's leaving of those eastern parts of the world, to plant new Churches in the west, it is so evident from the Scriptures themselves, that it is a shame to go about to prove it, but intolerable impudence to deny it. For as it is certain that the apostle appointed these single persons to preside over those Churches, so is it that there were presbyters already settled there, or to be settled by them. Now if the Churches were governed by a common council of mere presbyters, to what purpose was it to give a particular commission to a single person for its government, if he were no more than every ordinary presbyter? And therefore such a commission to one over a Church, in which were already a number of presbyters, is plainly to vest a peculiar authority in him distinct from, and superior to, that of the presbyters.

Thus, for example, when St. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus, where was already a number of presbyters—as our adversaries prove from the apostle's summoning them to Miletus—unless there were some power in Timothy more than in a presbyter, to what purpose should St. Paul beseech him so earnestly to abide in a Church that was already furnished with such a number of presbyters? To what purpose should he give him, and him alone, so many instructions for the right exercise of his government, when himself was but an atom of the whole body? To what purpose should he advise him in particular not to receive an accusation against a presbyter, unless attested by two or three witnesses? For if himself were no more than a single presbyter, what had he to do to judge his fellow presbyter? Lastly, if the power of the Church was in the body of the presbyters, why is all the advice for its due management given to a single person, and not to the presbytery? So evident it is that there were presbyteries settled by the apostles themselves in those very Churches over which they appointed single governors. And so much do our zealous adversaries gain in finding out so many

presbyteries in Scripture without a bishop, when it is so clear that the apostles not only presided over them themselves, but that they appointed others to do so after them, which is apparently to vest the supreme government in a single person above the common council of presbyters. But what can be more clearly attested than the uninterrupted succession of bishops in the greatest Churches from the apostles themselves? Do not all the ancients, by this undeniable principle, prescribe against heretics, and demonstrate the certain conveyance of the orthodox faith? Hath not Irenæus, for that very reason, given us an exact catalogue of the bishops of Rome, down from the apostles to his own time? and doth not he immediately after tell us that Polycarp, with whom he was acquainted, was made bishop of Smyrna by the apostles? And what was the office of a bishop, as distinct from that of a presbyter, himself very well knew, who was first a presbyter, and then a bishop. Doth not Tertullian make the same challenge for several apostolical churches, and he, too, very well knew the difference, being himself a presbyter, but never a bishop. Hath not Hegesippus given us an account of several successions; who, as he was a very ancient writer, so he lived after the time in which the distinction of the names of bishop and presbyter was made. The succession at Jerusalem I have already proved.* As for that of Antioch from St. Peter, beside the unanimous testimony of the ancients, I hope I need not prove that Ignatius was no presbyterian. The succession of the Church of Alexandria from St. Mark is so clear that I do not know that it was ever questioned, and it is particularly asserted by St. Jerome himself. And, lastly, Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, a learned and an early writer of the same age with Hegesippus, hath described the succession at Athens from Dionysius the Areopagite. Now I would fain know what better testimony men would have for a matter of fact. The witnesses are of unspotted credit; they give their evidence in the face of their enemies. They appeal to the undoubted records of the Churches themselves; they lived near enough to the time of the apostles to be sufficient witnesses of their own knowledge; and that which is most considerable of all is, that they lived after the distinction between the names of bishop and presbyter, and, as often as they have occasion to mention them, speak of them as distinct offices; and therefore, by their succession of bishops from the apostles, they could mean nothing but true and proper bishops.

And it is very observable that the community of the names bishop and presbyter was proper to the apostolical times, while the apostles themselves kept the greatest part of the episcopal

* In a former part of his work.

authority in their own hands: but as soon as they were withdrawn, and so the name of an apostle began to be laid aside, the name of bishop was appropriated to their successors in their supremacy. So that we find not one writer after the apostles' time (unless possibly St. Clement and St. Polycarp may be doubted, of which afterward) that doth not very carefully distinguish the names of bishop and presbyter—the one as peculiarly appertaining to the supreme order, the other as to the inferior—so as never to give the name of bishop to a presbyter, or of a presbyter to a bishop. And that is a clear demonstration, that as there was an imparity in ecclesiastical officers during the apostles' time, so there was ever after; and that when their next successors could not be properly styled apostles, the word bishop was appropriated to them, to express their order as distinct from, and superior to, the presbyters. I know, indeed, that Blondel, Salmasius, and Daillé—that Geneva triumvirate or confederacy for the subversion of the ancient state of the Christian Church—have, after their usual manner, raked together vast heaps of instances out of the writers of the two first ages, in which the name presbyter is applied to bishops; but they all depend upon one small quibble, or equivocal sense of the word, as it (the word presbyter) sometimes signifies age, and sometime office: for there is not one instance in which they give the title of a presbyter to a bishop of their own time; and whenever they speak of them, appropriate it to subordinate presbyters, to express their distinction from bishops: but when they speak of bishops of former times, they give them sometime the appellation of presbyters, as it is equivalent with that of ancients, and signifies, not their office, but their antiquity in the Church, and so might be given not only to all orders of the clergy, but to the laity, and the whole body of Christians, by whom the apostolical tradition was any way conveyed down to after ages. And it was upon that occasion that they used this word, to show the certainty of the conveyance of the true Christian doctrine from the apostles, in that they received it from the ancients that received it from them. In this sense, and in this only, do they use the word, as it denotes, not their *office*, but their *age*. This one short observation is a clear answer to all their voluminous heaps of collection, that though they make a great show to the ignorant with the length of their train, yet they all run upon this poor and dull **mistake**: as will appear more fully when we come to the particulars. In the mean time, it is enough to our present purpose that the episcopal succession to the apostles is so unanswerably proved and attested by the most ancient writers of the Church, and that without ambiguity or equivocation in their words.

And, indeed, this is so plain, not only as to the name, but the

thing, that our fiercest adversaries cannot but often confess it. Even the mighty Walo himself states the question thus—that there was a real distinction between bishops and presbyters in the most ancient ages of the Church, excepting only the very time of the apostles. And if so, then was it in all ages of the Church, since it is undeniable that the apostles challenged a superiority themselves during their own time; and Walo confesses that the bishops exercised the same in all ages after them. And that certainly is enough (if any proof can be so) against the presbyterian parity.

And yet I would not take any advantage of this confession, for that were only to convince one man, who is long since past it, and, to say truth, was never capable of it, (being convinced) but for the undeniable proof of the matter of fact itself; in that the most inquisitive searchers in this argument are forced to confess that there is no instance in all antiquity of any settled Church, without a superior and subordinate clergy, besides deacons; and if that be evident, it is no matter what they plead beside, but especially as to St. Jerome's unknown time, for beside that there was no such time, that any man knows of, so is it a flat contradiction to what all men know, and our adversaries confess, that in all ages of the Church there was a superiority of some above others, *i. e.*, of the apostles in their time, and of the bishops in all times except the apostles; and if so, then always.

And in this St. Jerome himself is as unhappy as any of his pretended followers; for when he hath, in haste, referred the original of episcopal superiority to an unknown interval, sometime after the apostles, he yet derives the custom at Alexandria, where the presbyters make their own bishop (but yet a proper bishop), from the death of St. Mark, who, according to his own account, died before *almost all* the apostles, and near forty years before St. John, suffering in the eighth year of Nero. Now, though these are the two greatest passages alleged against episcopacy, they are very reconcilable with each other. And in his very epistle to Evagrius, he expressly calls the three orders of the clergy—bishop, priest, and deacon, an apostolical tradition, as settled by the apostles themselves, particularly at Rome, Jerusalem, and Antioch. And yet notwithstanding that St. Jerome hath thus clearly demonstrated the falsehood and vanity of his own surmise of an unknown interval, by showing that there could be no such time, from the known records of the Church, that attest the succession of single bishops from the apostles themselves; yet for all that his pretended followers will keep to their dark and blind age next after the apostles: and though themselves agree that it lasted not above forty years at most, about or before which time began the institution of episcopal superiority in all

Christian Churches, yet are they so preposterous in their zeal as to go about to prove the presbyterian parity, for divers following ages, from the testimony of the writers that lived in them; which, beside that it is notoriously false, is a gross affront both to St. Jerome and themselves, when they have limited the presbyterian parity to the first age after the apostles, after that to derive it down through all following ages. And yet this they have laboured with vast pains, and with downright violence hailed in all the Fathers to the patronage of their cause, expressly against their own sense. The instances of this in Blondel, Walo, and Daillé are all along so scandalous, that I once thought it a shame to encounter them, and for that reason passed them over in treating of this argument; but because I find them urged with so much confidence by our restless Smectymnuans at home, only to abuse their ignorant followers (who, poor creatures, are no doubt very competent judges of their truth or falsehood), I shall let them see the integrity of their leaders, in seducing them, not only into an open schism, but an irreconcilable apostasy from the state of the whole Christian Church in all ages, with the most perverse and palpable falsehoods. And I find they will never suffer us to enjoy quiet and peace at home till we have rifled the Blondellian, Walonian, and Dailléan Magazines, out of whom they, upon all occasions of disturbance, furnish themselves with all their pretence and show of learning against the Church; and that is all that they do in defence of their cause, to transcribe citations out of them, but chiefly Blondel, who, indeed, is the father of them all; for Walo is such a confused, wandering, and immethodical writer, that few regard him, though, as to substance, his writings are the same with Blondel's; and Daillé does little more than follow them both, unless that now and then he forage to fetch in a new quotation: and therefore I shall keep close to Blondel, to whom, if we refer the several concurrent passages of the other two, it will appear that all the books against episcopacy are but one, and that is Blondel's—and how wise an one that is, let the world farther judge from the ensuing animadversions.

And, first, as for St. Clement of Rome, his case is the same with that of the apostles, and the same account that hath been given of the sense of their writings in this controversy, is to be given of his; for being an apostolical man, and conversant with the apostles, no wonder if he express himself in their language; and therefore he sometimes describes the whole body of the clergy by two orders—one ministerial, the other sacerdotal, as it was in the Jewish hierarchy. But whether there were an equality of all in the sacerdotal order, or whether a superiority of some above

others, cannot be collected from the signification of the word itself, because it signifies any kind or degree of authority; and therefore, how many degrees soever there might be of ruling clergy, it equally comprehends them all within its signification, though himself reckons up two orders as superior to deacons, and that is enough. And yet out of this small epistle what heaps of inferences hath Blondel raked for his presbyterian parity: and, first, he argues very shrewdly from its inscription—"the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth." From whence it follows that, seeing there is no mention of the clergy of either Church as distinct from the people, they were governed by a common council of rulers. But if anything could follow from hence, it is that there were no clergy at all, but that the Church was governed merely by the people, without any other rulers: so that it takes away his common council, as well as our single bishop. But what would these men conclude?—that St. Clement was not author of this epistle? Of that we have the same certainty as of the epistle itself. Or that because he drew it up in the name of his Church, he was not their bishop? If there were any logic in the inference, as there is none, yet it will not do against evidence of fact, in that we have as much certainty that Clement was bishop of Rome, as that there was then a Church of Rome; all the most ancient writers of the Church, Ignatius, Hegesippus, Irenæus, styling him particular bishop of that place—writers that distinguished a bishop from a presbyter, and never use the word, but of one as superior to presbyters. Particularly Irenæus affirms, in express words, that Clement was bishop of Rome when he wrote this epistle, and that he succeeded to the apostles in his bishopric; and therefore he was a proper bishop, as superior to priests and deacons—for that was the only use of the word in Irenæus's time, who himself was first presbyter, and then bishop of the Church of Lyons; and therefore when he avers that St. Clement was appointed bishop of Rome by the apostles, he is to be understood in his own sense, as superior to presbyters, such as himself was when advanced from the presbytery into the episcopal throne. So clear an instance is this epistle of the succession of bishops to the apostolical supremacy. But why did he write not in his own, but in his Church's name? Though the question be very impertinent, to demand the reason of another man's actions at so great a distance of time, yet there is an easy and an obvious account to be given of it, viz., that addressing this exhortation to the factious party of the people against the clergy, he might not think it so proper at first to make use of his own episcopal authority, but rather with all gentleness and brotherly love to persuade them, in the name of the whole Church,

to reconcile themselves to their pastors. For this coming from the people, it would more effectually move, and in a manner upbraid them, to compliance and humility. And so it proved, for so Hegesippus informs us, that from that time forward the Church of Corinth continued in the right faith, till the time of Primus, their bishop, with whom, in his voyage to Rome, he conversed many days at Corinth, and so from him understood the true state of that Church.

But the demonstrative passage in this epistle is this, that the apostles, preaching of the word through divers countries and cities, ordained everywhere the first-fruits of such as believed, having made proof and trial of them by the Spirit, to be overseers and deacons, to minister to them that should afterwards believe. And this (says he) they did, because they understood from our Lord that strife and contention would arise about episcopacy; and therefore, having absolute knowledge beforehand thereof, they appointed the persons before-mentioned into that office, with this instruction, that, as some died, others well approved should be chosen into their ministry. Very well! for if the apostles, foreseeing that there would arise schisms and dissensions in the Church about the government or episcopacy of it, took particular care to settle governors over the Churches of their own conversion for the prevention of that mischief, and withal vested any of them with the same power that themselves had exercised, to appoint their successors, as the apostles had appointed them, to all future ages of the Church—in the first place, what could be more peremptorily expressed to contradict St. Jerome's dream, that the government of the Church naturally fell into the presbyters' hands, because the apostles had taken no care for its settlement after their own time? Whereas it is here positively averred, by this apostolical man, that they were so far from being guilty of such a stupid negligence, that they took particular care to settle its government for all after ages, as foreseeing how impossible it would be to prevent everlasting schisms and factions about it, if it had been left undetermined, and exposed to every one that would challenge it. And the truth is, if they should not have had so much insight into the nature of things as to foresee that there would have been no end of contention about government, whilst it was left in common, all the world would have condemned them of unpardonable stupidity; so that the wisdom of the Church, which St. Jerome imputes to the experience of those that followed, is, by this apostolical man, plainly ascribed to the foresight of the apostles, and those that went before: so clear a bar is this epistle to the claim of presbyterian devolution, and so is it to the people's right of electing their

officers, as the Independents plead, when it is evident that the apostles left it not to their choice, but set such officers over them as themselves liked and approved of.

Secondly, if the apostles received their power from Christ, as Christ did his from God (for so St. Clement affirms), and in pursuance of his divine institution appointed officers in the Church with this instruction, that they should appoint others to succeed them in their office, and so downward through all ages of the Church, what can be more evident than that they left the same supreme authority, wherewith they were endued, appointing rulers in the Church to succeed themselves, as they succeeded our Saviour? For, as Blondel observes, the form of ecclesiastical government was never altered by the apostles; so that if they themselves were vested with a supremacy of power in the Church, they conveyed the same power to their successors, because the power of government wherewith they were immediately endued by our Saviour was to continue for ever.

But Blondel never thinks he hath inference enough, and therefore, after he hath drawn presbytery out of this epistle, he proceeds in the next place to bring forth independency, viz., that the officers of the Church, whenever there was any competition, were appointed by the people; that is, because they were appointed by the apostles themselves, for so St. Clement tells us they were, to prevent the contentions that might arise about their election, if they had not settled it by their own authority. So that the inference is this, that Clement affirms that the apostles left *not* the choice of officers to the people; therefore, says Blondel, they did leave it to the choice of the people. And that is a very fair inference; but the most pleasant of all is, that the presbyters took place according to seniority, and so the eldest presbyter presided in all debates and councils, because the apostles appointed the first-fruits of their conversion to be officers in the Church; as if every one that was first converted had a right to it, or as if all their first-fruits had been made Church officers, when St. Clement tells us that they chose such out of them as they judged fittest for the work. And therefore Blondel himself cautiously adds, in a parenthesis, “*Si modo probabiles essent;*” and that eats up the assertion; for by that they were chose, not for their seniority, but their other qualifications. But though there is no footstep of any presbyterian seniority in all the records of the Church, yet Blondel is resolved to have it so, because, without it, he cannot avoid that superiority that is given to single persons over presbyteries in all Churches; and therefore there is not any one passage that he hath alleged out of the Fathers to which he hath not tacked this conclusion,

though it sounds no more towards it than that in the beginning God created the heaven and earth.

And yet this story of succession by mere seniority, as ungrounded as it is, is the third fundamental article of the presbyterian cause; for next to St. Jerome's unknown interval, and the equivalency of the words bishop and presbyter in the apostolical age, this fable of succeeding in presidency over the college of presbyters, only by right of seniority, is most clamorously insisted upon by the French brethren. Walo is very fierce and vehement in its pursuit; but Blondel lays it for the very foundation of his whole discourse, and declares, at the beginning of his undertaking, that without its supposition there is no understanding the state or records of the primitive Church; but that, being once granted, it clears all difficulties that occur in Church history. And therefore he does not only lay down this *hypothesis fundamenti loco* (as he expresses it) as a foundation of his whole work, but he withal lays his foundation *inconcussis firmamentis*, upon everlasting pillars. And therefore, partly because of his great confidence, but chiefly because it is his main shift to elude the argument of succession by single persons, it having here fallen in my way, I shall once for all consider it, that I may avoid the tedious impertinency that he has fallen into, of repeating it afresh upon every citation.

And, in the first place, this being the great foundation, and standing upon the pillars of the earth, one would expect the man had at least some plausible grounds to support both that and the weight of his own confidence; yet, when he comes to talk of nothing but sunshine and demonstration, his whole discourse is all dream and fiction, without so much as any shadow of authority. So that he does not so much as attempt to bring one precedent to warrant his assertion—nothing but wild and remote fetches that stand upon no *pillars*, but mere guess and empty air. Though that which farther aggravates his confidence is, that the learned jesuit, Petavius, had, to rebuke Walo's pertinence, made a public challenge to all the world, to assign but any one instance of it in all the records of the Christian Church; and yet Blondel should undertake to refute some passages in the very same page, without concerning himself in the least to take notice of so bold a challenge, but much less to answer it. Though that which worst of all enhances his disingenuousness is, that he is so far from producing any tolerable precedent for his conceit, that he begins his whole discourse with two particular instances that overthrow it, viz., Timothy and Titus, in whom he confesses the rule was not observed: and that is a very good beginning to lay an immovable foundation to prove it *was*.

But he supplies his want of history with strength of argument, and, in his tedious notes upon the counterfeit¹ Ambrose, has fortified it on all sides with arguments fetched from the very bowels of antiquity: “*Ex intimo remotissimæ antiquitatis sinu repetitis.*” But he has drawn them forth with that force and violence, that he has rather unbowed than delivered antiquity of its burden. He begins with the fore-mentioned standing passage out of St. Clement, that the apostles ordained, out of their first-fruits, governors of the Church. And so no doubt they did, because they had none other to ordain; but who could ever have believed that any man could hence conclude that they always pitched upon the eldest Christian in every Church, because they chose out of their first converts those that they judged fittest for the trust? But Blondel adds, “that our Saviour chose his first disciples to be his apostles; and that St. Peter made a qualification of an apostle to be elected into the place of Judas, that he had conversed with our Saviour from the beginning.” And very good reason too, when the first point of his office then was to be a witness of his works and miracles. And every child has sense enough to understand that St. Peter had regard to that alone in his qualification, and not merely to any man’s age, that was incapable in itself of being any reason at all. But, in the next place, St. Paul, and after him several councils, forbid neophytes, or raw converts, to be made bishops. From whence no doubt it follows, of its own accord, that therefore the most ancient convert had right to it by virtue of his seniority. These are the wonderful arguments raked from the very bowels of antiquity to demonstrate the fixed and perpetual observation of this rule. Though who could think it possible that any man of learning or but natural sense could be so bewitched with his own folly, as to think of imposing upon the world with such intolerable trash and trifling?

Secondly, the time that he assigns for the continuance of this custom, viz., to the thirty-sixth year of the second century, is altogether precarious, and without any other ground than that it suits with his own time of St. Jerome’s alteration of government all the world over; for that he places in the very same interval, and upon as good authority, that is none at all but his own. Neither is he here content with asserting this change in general, but fixes the same time in divers particular Churches. As in the Church of Jerusalem he begins the custom of elections at Mark, the sixteenth bishop of that see, and the very first Gentile that sat in it, in the year 135, after the rebuilding of the city by Adrian, and when it was inhabited only by the Gentiles. This he insists upon with mighty zeal and importunity, but does

not so much as attempt to prove it by any one record ; only one small argument he is transported with, viz., the short time of their sitting, which (as he fancies) could come to pass from no other reason than their great age when they came to succeed. But as it happens, very unluckily, the succession of bishops after Mark is altogether as quick upon one another as it was before. And yet the times were then much more secure and peaceable, whereas before Jerusalem had been a public slaughter-house to the Romans ; the Jews upon every little opportunity breaking out into rebellion, and by their perpetual disorders so highly provoked their Roman masters, that they made havoc of all that came in their way, without making any distinction between Jew and Christian—all Christians at that time passing under the name of Jews. No wonder then if, in such a time of war and bloodshed (the most destructive that ever was from the creation), any that were members of the Jewish commonwealth met with such speedy and untimely deaths. And whereas Blondel observes, that during all that time there was no persecution at Jerusalem as there was at Rome, from whence it came to pass that some of the Roman bishops sat not many months ; he might withal have considered, that war, but especially rebellion, are as destructive as persecution ; but most of all such a war as this was against the Jews, that was carried on with all the keenness of outrage and inhumanity : whilst they slaughtered them, not as they conquered other nations, but out of implacable hatred to the nation itself, partly from their frequent rebellions, and partly from their opposition to the established religion of the empire.

His next instance of this custom is in the Church of Alexandria, and this he proves out of Eutychius ; but if this testimony were of any validity, as it is of none at all, it is expressly cross to his own design ; for he affirms, in peremptory terms, that the patriarchs of Alexandria always succeeded by election. And yet this is the only passage that Blondel produces for succession by mere seniority. His other proofs of this custom in the churches of Antioch, Athens, and Rome, are nothing but frivolous surmises, in that most of them are said to have been acquainted with the apostles ; from whence he concludes, that they therefore succeeded by right of seniority. But such trifles are too contemptible to be answered, and it is in vain to argue with men that can satisfy themselves with such shadows of proof ; for there is no cause in the world so absurd but is capable of as wise apologies as these. So that, in the result of all, presbytery is not more exposed by any one thing than the meanness of its own pleas ; for if it had anything tolerable to say in its own behalf, it

would certainly scorn to condescend to such hungry and begging ways of argumentation.

Thirdly, when he makes this unknown change of custom to have been decreed and instituted by solemn council, it will be as hard to find any such council, as it is that œcumenical one of St. Jerome, in which, *toto orbe decretum est*, it was agreed all the world over to settle the Church in a wiser posture of government than the apostles had done—a council that was never heard of by any man but himself, nor by himself, till he heard himself say so. And it was no doubt the very same council (for they sat at the same time) that made Blondel's universal change of succession; and we find just as much evidence of it in the ancient records. But Blondel, because he will say something, it matters not how awkwardly it serves his turn, lays this great alteration on the great Nicene Council, canon the fourth. But, alas, this time came much too late for the time of this universal alteration; it met not until the year 325: whereas the change, according to Blondel, was made in the year 135, long before any of the Nicene fathers, or their great grandfathers, were born into the world. But then, secondly, there is no such thing expressed or any way intimated in the canon itself, whereby it is decreed, that every bishop shall be elected by the vote of all the bishops of the province, or their consent by letter, and the election to be confirmed and approved of by the metropolitan, and the ordination to be solemnized by three bishops, at least. What appearance here of any change from succession by age to that of election? Here is not a syllable of abrogating the former—nothing but a ratification of the old custom and form, both of election and consecration. For St. Clement tells us that the first bishops were chosen and appointed by the apostles themselves. And St. Cyprian assures us that the same custom was observed in his time in his own and almost all other provinces, and that too “*de traditione divinâ et apostolicâ observatione.*” So that this canon was no new institution, but only a confirmation of the old apostolical tradition. For whereas the same method of election and ordination had been always and in all Churches observed, it was of late openly violated by Meletius, whose irregular proceedings gave occasion to the enacting, not only this, but the two following canons: for he had taken upon him wherever he came to appoint and ordain bishops, priests, and deacons, by his own single authority; of which complaint being brought to the council, they made this canon to stop so wild an enormity. And now what does all this signify towards proving the change of succession by age to that of election?

Fourthly, the reason that he assigns for this alteration is a very

foul reflection upon the wisdom of the apostles and apostolical Church: "Iniquum secundi seculi fideles censebant," &c. "The believers of the second age thought it unjust that they who had less gifts should have greater honour, and be preferred before the more worthy; but that men ought to be preferred according to their merits and abilities, lest God should be defrauded of the use of those talents that he had bestowed upon them for the service of his Church." This is so very good a reason, that it could be nothing but dulness and stupidity in the apostles and Christians of the first century not to observe it. But, instead thereof, to have no regard to useful qualifications for the disposal of the highest authority in the Church, and annex it merely to old age, howsoever unfit and unable to manage it, is such a grossness of folly as cannot be equalled. And Blondel himself has pretty well set it off in his fore-mentioned account of the quick successions of bishops at Jerusalem: "Quis tam crasso sub aëre natos," &c. "Who can believe that the sons of Sion breathed such dull air, and were so stupidly negligent of the common edification of the Church, that, passing by the more able and vigorous, they should make choice of dotards half dead, men altogether incapable to discharge the office of the episcopal chair? But we shall admit no absurdity, and proceed upon just and good grounds, if (the custom of preferring by seniority being in force) the ancient Church of Jerusalem gave every one their due, and therefore would not deny the right of seniority to any of the ancient presbyters for their very old age. For in what condition soever the second was when the first departed this life, if he were but *compos mentis*, he was not to be defrauded one moment of the prerogative due to his age, but was to be placed in his turn in the chair of presidency." Now has not Blondel here made a very fair apology for the wisdom of the apostles, to lay the institution, or at least the prescription, of so absurd and sottish a custom at their doors, and excuse the Christians that followed after them from the worst of folly, only because they were forced to comply with a custom that the apostles had by their practice made a right in the Christian Church? So unhappy are these men in their apologies, as still to leave the wisdom of the apostles in the lurch. The "Sententia Hieronymi" supposes them so weak in their understandings, as to have left the Church in such a posture in which it must have been fatally destroyed by schisms; which gross defect was afterwards made up by men that were wiser than themselves, and were made so by the experience of their folly. And this defence here supposes them so void of common sense, as to appoint for the supreme government of the Church such per-

sons as, in the ordinary course of nature, were of all men unfit-
 test to undertake it, and least able to manage it.

But, lastly, granting all that Blondel contends for, I cannot understand what he gains by it; for it gives his president by seniority all that power that we make proper to a bishop by election, viz., that nothing be done without him, or, as Blondel himself expresses it, “*Ut omnem ecclesiæ actum præ non sine aliis gubernaret.*” In short, that which the Greek canons call the *τὸ κῆρος των γινομένων*, that authority that was necessary to give validity to every action: and after that, it is not at all material to this dispute to enquire after the manner of succession; for whether they received it by seniority or by election, yet so long as it was a superior power, and derived to them from the apostles, that is all that we do or can demand for episcopal superiority. Blondel, indeed, would intimate, as if they succeeded without any shadow of precedent or record, then only cites Eutychius, who says that it was so done at Alexandria; but he writes at random, and if he did not, is not of age enough to speak for himself in a matter of so great antiquity. St. Jerome, and the counterfeit Ambrose, say that the bishop was always taken out of the college of presbyters, but they nowhere affirm that he entered upon his office without any farther consecration. And yet because they express themselves only in general terms, and do not make particular mention of his ordination, our adversaries conclude that he had none. So hardly do they deal with the ancients, when they would draw them to their side, as to conclude, that whatever they do not affirm, they deny. But, once for all, if they had in express terms averred, that from the time of the apostles the senior presbyter succeeded a bishop without any new ordination, their testimony would have been of as little authority as the tale of Eutychius. For they lived at too great a distance from the apostolical age to know anything of it but from more ancient records; and therefore their own bare testimony is here as of little weight as Blondel’s or Walo’s own affirmation upon their own authority. For a man that lives three or four hundred years after a matter of fact, is as incompetent a witness of it as him that lives fourteen, unless he can vouch it by some more ancient testimony; and then it is believed, not upon his own, but his author’s authority. And therefore neither St. Jerome, nor the counterfeit Ambrose, nor any other that lived in the fourth century, ought to be regarded or trusted for anything they say concerning things done in the first, when they bring nothing to prove it but their own assertion. So that, if Blondel had their testimony, it would do them no service; but, when he has it not, he talks altogether without book and without

authority. All these considerations, I hope, are enough to show the vanity of Blondel's dream of succession by seniority; and so I return to St. Clement, from whom Blondel has drawn me into this digression.

And here the only advantageous circumstance that our innovators can have from this epistle is, that there was no bishop at that time at Corinth: as from the nature of the schism it is probable there was not; for that seems to have been the bottom of it, it being made by some of the people against the presbyters, who, not having the supreme authority in the Church, had not sufficient power to suppress their insolence. And it seems to be the very same case that happened in St. Paul's time, when, as the counterfeit Ambrose (the presbyterians' darling author) affirms, schisms were so easily made in the Church by the presbyters or the people: "*Quia adhuc rectores ecclesiis non omnibus locis fuerant constituti.*" Because the governors of Churches were not as yet settled in all places—the apostles and evangelists not thinking fit to appoint them till they had brought the work to some perfection. And therefore, as I have already observed, we find but few settled bishops in their own time, that office chiefly resting in themselves, unless in the Church of Jerusalem; which, being the mother Church of all, must needs be brought to its due settlement before any of its colonies and plantations. And whether as yet there had been any particular bishop set over the Church of Corinth, is not to be known from history. And whether there had been any, and the see was now vacant, or as yet there had been none, the state of that Church was no other than it was under St. Paul, subject to some evangelical or apostolical man, who took the same oversight of it as the apostle himself did. As Dionysius at Athens, Titus in Crete, Timothy at Ephesus; as we find by this epistle Clement at Rome, who tells the schismatics that those very priests, that they had presumed to depose from their ministry, were placed over them either by the apostles themselves, or by some other eminent persons, such as were the evangelists or secondary apostles: so that it is evident enough that they were still under the care of some apostolical men. Now because, perhaps, there was not a settled bishop at that time at Corinth, from thence to infer that there was then no such order of men in the world, and that, though we know the very names of several bishops in several Churches, shows how bold men are forced to be with their own understandings when they will be fed or bribed into the defence of a bad cause. In short, when it is evident that the apostles exercised a supremacy over their own churches; when they vested divers single persons with the same

power, as Titus, not only over all the Churches, but all the presbyters and deacons in the several towns and cities in Crete; when in the most eminent Churches a personal succession of bishops from the very apostles is recorded; when this epistle is written by one who is a proper bishop, and succeeded to an apostle in his bishopric; when, in his description of the hierarchy in the Christian Church, he specifies three, in allusion to the three orders of high priest, priest, and Levite in the Jewish—a thing very usual with the first writers of the Church; even St. Jerome himself, and that in his epistle to Evagrius, “*Et ut sciamus traditiones apostolicas sumptas de veteri Testamento, quod Aaron et filii ejus et Levitæ in templo fuerunt, hoc sibi episcopi et presbyteri et diaconi vendicent in ecclesiâ.*” What the high priest, priests, and Levites were in the temple, that the bishops, presbyters, and deacons ought, by apostolical constitution, following the Jewish polity, to be in the Church. Now when, after all this, we do not find that there was a settled bishop at Corinth at the time of this schism, if men will conclude that there were then no bishops in the Christian world, they may do so for their own pleasure; but then I would humbly move that they would be pleased not to impose their conclusion upon other men’s understandings.

And now, having thus far and fully proved the divine institution and apostolical prescription of episcopal superiority, our next enquiry is, after what manner this institution was reduced to practice? For seeing that government is a practical thing, its institution is no other way to be so clearly understood as by comparing it with its practice. So that it is certain that the same way of government, that was always practised in the Christian Church, was most agreeable to our Saviour’s institution. And by it we may not only trace the method of their proceedings, but discern the reasons upon which they proceed. And then if the established constitution of the Church of England not only agree upon the most ancient practice, but be founded upon the same reasons, that, I hope, is enough to place it above all opposition. And as by this method I shall make good mine own cause, so I shall prescribe against all other claims, for it is certain that was never appointed that was never practised. And therefore, though it is no hard matter for false pretenders to make some seeming pleas to a divine institution, yet if they can show no example of their claim in the ancient practice of the Christian Church, that is an insuperable bar to all their pretences.

Thus, for example, when the Romanists pretend that the whole government of the Christian Church was founded in the

supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and plead Scripture for it, though I must confess they do it so wretchedly that their own arguments are the greatest shame to their own pretence—yet supposing that they had any seeming foundation for it in the Scriptures, yet because there is not the least footstep of any such practice in the ancient Church for some hundred years, that is an undeniable demonstration that there never was any such divine institution; for if any such there had been, the apostles would not have failed of conforming to it, and therefore when they do not, that shows that they had no such command; especially when, if there were any such institution, the whole government of the Christian Church was bottomed upon it, and therefore must have been settled in the first place: so that when we find nothing of it for so many ages, it is evident that there never was any such thing, and therefore never ought to be. And as this prescribes against Roman tyranny, so it does against all sorts of fanatic anarchy, who all agree in this one principle, that they will have no order of bishops superior to that of presbyters. But if they can give no certain instance of any Church since the apostles that was ordinarily governed by presbyters without a bishop, it is in vain for them to load their margins with texts of Scripture, or rather, as their custom is, with figures of chapter and verse—and, indeed, the mere figures, for the most part, signify as much to the purpose as the words themselves. For if the supreme government of the Church had been settled, as they say it was, by Christ and his apostles, in a common council of presbyters, it is impossible but that most, if not all the Churches had at first conformed to it. And therefore the universal practice of episcopal superiority in all known Churches does as clearly demonstrate that there was no divine institution of presbyterian or independent parity, nor of Papal tyranny. But when we first lay the institutions of our Saviour and his apostles for the ground-work, and then draw upon them the practice of the primitive Church, that will give us an exact landscape of the true state of Christianity. For there were few Churches brought to any kind of perfection in the apostles' time—perhaps none at all beside the mother Church of Jerusalem; and therefore that state in which we find Churches when they were completely finished we have reason to conclude most agreeable to the apostles' design, especially when we find all the known Churches in the world settled in the same form of government in which they left the Church of Jerusalem.

And, in the first place, there is nothing more evident, in all the records of the primitive Church, than that the apostles and first doctors of the Christian faith endeavoured, as far as they were

able, to model the first settlement of Churches according to the present state and division of the Roman empire. For though our blessed Saviour settled the supreme government of his Church upon the apostles and their successors, yet he nowhere prescribed the bounds and limits of every man's jurisdiction, but left it, as indeed the nature of the thing required, to their own prudence to divide their provinces among themselves. And accordingly we find, from the very beginning, that they formed the jurisdiction of Churches according to the civil judicatures of the empire. And this they did with special regard to the interest of civil government, that they might not be any occasion of making alterations or disturbances in the state; which could scarce have been avoided had they not cut them out by the same pattern and model. For if the jurisdiction of Churches had been of a larger extent than the civil state, it would be in their power to hamper the civil government as they please, and, if they please, destroy it. For if their jurisdiction extend beyond its bounds, then it could exercise it out of its territories; and then, if it have power to summon its members—as if it have any it hath that, and if it be a Church it must have some—it might cite all or any of its subjects out of its dominions; and then they are no longer subjects than as themselves please. So that the very nature of civil government limits the extent of Churches; and when our Saviour commanded his apostles so to plant them in all kingdoms and commonwealths, as not to abate the rights of the state, wherever they came, that alone bound them to limit the bounds of Churches to the bounds of civil government. And so we find all Christendom modelled before any civil power concerned itself in its settlement; and Constantine found it so well ordered, for compliance with the civil state of the empire, that he made no alteration in that, till he did in this; and then, indeed, it followed too fast of its own accord. So as the soul is conveyed into the body, so as to conform itself to the same shape and bulk, without any other change, but giving it life and activity, Christianity was brought into the civil government, so as to give it new strength and vigour by all those precepts of obedience and loyalty that it binds upon the consciences of all subjects; but as for the body of the state, it was punctually to conform itself and its discipline to the very same mold. And this we shall find practised in the primitive Church, according to all the divisions and subdivisions of government in the empire.

THE EXCLUSIVE
RIGHT OF BISHOPS TO ORDAIN.

BY GEORGE HICKES, D.D.

I WOULD not be so understood as if I maintained that presbyters were never joined with bishops in ordinations, nor ever laid hands with them upon the heads of such as were to be ordained. I only mean, that ordinations cannot be made without a bishop ; and that all ordinations by presbyters, and much more by laics, are invalid and null. Nay, I assert that the presence of presbyters is by no means necessary to ordinations, but that they may be duly celebrated by the bishop alone. Having thus explained my opinion, I shall confirm it by these following arguments.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, says, “ How shall they preach, except they be sent ? ” So that, in the apostle’s judgment, no man can lawfully preach the Gospel, or perform any sacred function, but he that is sent by God—but he to whom God has committed the power of preaching the word. But since, now that miracles have been long ceased, we can have recourse only to ordinary means, it is a great question in debate among Christians what is the subject of this power, I mean of ordination, viz., who they are to whom the power of consecrating others for the ministry is committed : a question, indeed, of the greatest moment, and to the discussion of which we ought seriously to apply ourselves. I maintain, therefore, that this power of ordaining is placed only in the bishops, and am convinced of this, both by the testimonies of holy Scripture, and by the unanimous consent of the first and purest ages of the Church.

I. Though you read over the New Testament never so often, you will find that none but the apostles ordained ecclesiastics. St. James is set over the Church of Jerusalem by the apostles. St. Paul and St. Barnabas, both of them apostles, consecrate presbyters. As to the argument drawn from the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, which the presbyterians produce against us, not without great triumph, many things may be answered to it. It may be enough in this place to observe only, that the second Epistle to Timothy informs us that St.

Paul himself also laid his own hands upon Timothy. But what countenance is given by these Epistles to the cause of the equality of the clergy, I am not able to see. It is proved, indeed, that the presbyters did, together with the apostles, lay their hands upon the heads of the candidates. But I desire to know, whether from this place it can ever be proved that the presbyters did at any time ordain without the apostles, or without bishops. No such matter. It is most certain that the imposition of hands, mentioned in Acts xiii. 3, relates to a particular benediction. St. Paul committed a power of ordaining to Timothy and Titus, when he made them bishops of the Churches of Ephesus and of Crete. And, indeed, from these Epistles it may be gathered, not without the highest probability, that the presbyters of the second order did never in the apostles' time obtain a power of ordaining. It cannot be doubted but that many presbyters were constituted by St. Paul in the Church of Crete; yet Titus is sent thither with a peculiar power of ordaining. Now from this it seems to follow, that a power of ordaining was never committed to the presbyters of the second order. But to dispatch this matter in a few words: the holy Scriptures do not afford the least argument, by which it can be proved that presbyters ever either ordained, or received a power of ordaining from the apostles. We read in the New Testament of no man that was ordained but by the apostles themselves, who, without doubt, were superior to presbyters. St. Paul set single persons over Churches, with a peculiar authority of ordination. Let those that are impartial judges say whether the opinion of such as are for episcopacy be not both safer and wiser, which declares for retaining that method of ordaining which the holy Scriptures, if they do not command, do at least not obscurely describe and commend to us.

II. But that we may the more perfectly understand the sense of the holy Scriptures concerning this controversy, I am next, according to my proposed method, to produce the testimonies of the primitive Church, backed with which we need not fear asserting, that lawful ordinations can be derived only from bishops. And, indeed, if I can clearly prove that the primitive Church acknowledged no ordinations but such as were episcopal, it will be easy for any one that has but common sense to collect, that that was the sense of the apostles, who founded the Christian society: and that that was also the meaning of all those passages of holy Scripture, which plainly declare that ecclesiastics were ordained only by the apostles; and that a power of ordaining was in a peculiar manner entrusted with Timothy and Titus: and of those which attest that if such are

promoted to the sacred dignity of the priesthood as are not worthy nor fit for it, the fault is in the bishops alone, and the bishops alone are to be blamed for it. This article concerning ordination comprises, in itself alone, almost all the controversies concerning the authority of bishops. If they with whom we have to do would at least grant us this, that ordinations ought to be had from none but bishops, we should very easily agree about other controversies, which are of much less moment. In this matter we utterly disagree with the presbyterians. We cannot allow the ordinations of presbyters; we cannot but reject them, as rash, vain, and null. Nor have the presbyterians any just cause of complaining that we treat them more harshly than what becomes Christians; since, as they pretend, they are joined with us in the same bond of faith and charity. But we are forbid to deal more mildly in a matter of so much importance by the sacred oracles, which seem to have committed this power of ordination only to the apostles and their successors: we are forbid this by the constant opinion of the Catholic Church, whose authority, next to that of the holy Scriptures, ever has been and ever must be regarded by us as of very great weight; and, indeed, unless I am very much mistaken, the Catholic Church affords us such full evidence in this behalf, so perfect and complete in every part, that nothing farther can be desired, even by the most obstinate of our adversaries. Now, to demonstrate this with all the clearness possible, I will undertake to prove these three propositions.

1st. That the primitive Church admitted of no ordinations, but such as were administered by bishops.

2ndly. That all the holy fathers, to a man, who speak of ordination, do so speak of it as of a power appropriated only to bishops.

3rdly. That ordinations attempted by the insolent temerity of presbyters were always invalid upon that very account, that they were administered by presbyters, who have not the least authority in this matter.

I. In order to prove my first proposition beyond all dispute, I could produce all the histories of the Church, all the epistles of the holy fathers, and, in fine, all the councils, as evidence in this behalf. Wherever we read of the ordination, either of a bishop, or of a presbyter, we also read that it was administered by a bishop. The second canon (of those which are called apostolical, and which, without all doubt, do testify the usages of the second and third centuries) enjoins, that a presbyter be ordained by one bishop. And who ever saw a canon, which I do not say confirms, but so much as intimates ordinations by presbyters? But let us reflect a little upon the two first canons; they are

expressed thus: "Let a bishop be ordained by two or three bishops, and a presbyter by one bishop." From these two canons taken together I argue, first, that the ordination of bishops is distinct and separate from the ordination of presbyters—I mean that by which they are made presbyters. Secondly, that a presbyter cannot be made a bishop without a new ordination, different from the former by which he was made a presbyter. From hence also I think it follows, that Blondel's *πρωτοκαθεδρία*, or first place among the presbyters, which that learned man endeavours with so much pains to make good, can by no means be confirmed by the most ancient monuments of the Catholic Church. And, indeed, it is well worth observing, that Salmasius, Blondel, and Daillé—that triumvirate of enemies to the episcopal order—did all own that the power of ordaining was appropriated to bishops only, as soon as the orders of bishop and priest began to be distinguished. Since, therefore, it has been sufficiently proved that these orders were always distinct, from the very times of the apostles; it will follow, from that concession of theirs, that the power of ordaining did always belong to the bishops only.

But that I may omit nothing which may seem to conduce to the farther illustration of this matter, I will thoroughly consider all the arguments that are usually brought for the ordinations of presbyters. And since David Blondel does, both in learning, and judgment, and great reading, far exceed all the rest of our adversaries, I will sum up, with the utmost fidelity, all that even Blondel can suspect makes against us. All which that learned man has been able to collect concerning ordinations, I have carefully read over more than once, and it may be all reduced to these five heads.

1st. He maintains that the presbyters of the Church of Alexandria, from the time of St. Mark the Evangelist, down to that of the patriarch Heracleas (that is, from the year of our Lord 61, to the year 264), did name their bishops at their own discretion, and were both the electors, and ordainers, and enthronizers of their own bishop.

2ndly. He expects great service in this cause from the Chorepiscopi, who being, he says, no more than mere presbyters, are frequently read to have ordained presbyters and deacons.

3rdly. He asserts that in the Gothic Churches, for the space of almost seventy years, from about the year of our Lord 260, to the year 327, the power of ordination and jurisdiction was in the hands of the presbyters.

4thly. He borrows his next argument from Cassian, who relates that the abbot Daniel was advanced to the dignity of presbyter by Paphnutius, a presbyter.

5thly. He concludes all with a famous passage of St. Leo,

concerning the ordinations of pseudo-bishops, whom Blondel, honest man, dreamed to have been mere presbyters.

These are all the arguments for the ordinations of presbyters which this most zealous and learned adversary has, with the greatest industry, and with indefatigable pains, been able to rake together out of numerous libraries and scraps of history, and, in one word, out of the rubbish of all antiquity. And to each of these arguments I shall endeavour to give a short, clear, and solid answer.

1. The first instance is grounded upon the authority of St. Jerome, and of Eutychius's Annals. "The presbyters (says St. Jerome), choosing one out of their own number, and placing him in a higher degree, named him Bishop." Eutychius, as he is translated into Latin by Mr. Selden, affirms that St. Mark chose twelve presbyters, with Hananias, to the end that, when the patriarchate should be vacant, they might, out of those twelve presbyters, make choice of one, on whose head the other eleven might lay their hands, and consecrate him.

I answer, that nothing can be gathered out of this passage of St. Jerome that does any way come up to the purpose. He affirms, indeed, that a bishop was chosen and named by the presbyters; but he says not one word of his ordination. And what is this to the case in hand? I assert that, in the primitive Church, presbyters never ordained. On the contrary, Blondel shows, out of St. Jerome, that the presbyters of Alexandria chose their bishop, placed him in a higher degree, and named him; as if it were the same thing to choose and to ordain, or as if he that names has also power to consecrate a bishop.

With respect to Eutychius, it will suffice to observe that he was a little author of the tenth century, an ignorant, credulous, and foolish collector of all sorts of trivial, worthless matters, and is deservedly to be reckoned, not among the historians, but among the famous compilers of romances. Besides all this, he contradicts both St. Athanasius and Eusebius. Nay, to show all the world how diligent and accurate an historian he is, he affirms that the bishops assembled at the Council of Nice were in number two thousand and forty-eight. And yet Eutychius himself can never be brought to give his suffrage for the ordinations of presbyters. In his chronicle he frequently enough affirms that bishops are superior to presbyters, by divine institution. But they who desire to see more concerning the antiquities of Alexandria, let them consult Abrahamus Echellensis Maronita, who has deservedly chastised Selden for his wretched blunders with regard to the Arabic tongue, and for his meanly serving a very bad hypothesis.

2. The next example is taken from the Chorepiscopi; to

which I give this answer. . The thirteenth canon of the Council of Ancyra provides, that the Chorepiscopi shall not ordain presbyters or deacons, without the leave of those bishops under whom they were. The tenth canon of the Council of Antioch has these words: "It pleased the holy council, that they who are in villages or countries, or they who are called Chorepiscopi, although they have received imposition of hands from bishops, should yet know their own bounds, and govern the Churches put under them, and content themselves with the government and care of them," &c.

This Antiochian canon (says Cabassutius) does farther inform us in two particulars concerning Chorepiscopi. 1. That they were not constituted in cities, but in villages and lesser towns. 2. That it may happen that Chorepiscopi be also dignified with the episcopal order: which observation does admirably reconcile the Antiochian canon with the decretal epistle of Pope Damasus, which denies that the Chorepiscopi have any right of ordaining; because they are no more than presbyters, and are by no means bishops. For Damasus speaks of the power of a Chorepiscopus strictly, as he is such; yet he does not deny but it may happen that a bishop undergo the care of a Chorepiscopus, or a Chorepiscopus be consecrated a bishop. Thus far Cabassutius. Therefore from this Antiochian canon it manifestly appears, that the Chorepiscopi were very often adorned with the episcopal order. And why, then, might they not ordain and consecrate both priests and deacons by imposition of hands? In vain, therefore, does Blondel bring into the field against us these Chorepiscopi, since they make nothing for the ordinations of presbyters.

3. Our next combatants are the Goths, whom he arms out of Philostorgius: but we have little occasion to be afraid even of the Goths. Concerning the Gothic regions converted to the Christian faith, we may consult Philostorgius, Sozomen, Socrates, and Theodoret. Blondel contends that these Gothic Churches, being converted to the faith by the clergy that were in captivity, continued without any bishop for seventy years; and that all power, as well of jurisdiction as ordination, was in the hands of the presbyters, till Ulphilas was created bishop by Eusebius. To this I answer—

(1). Granting that there were no bishops in the Gothic Churches before Ulphilas, it does not by any means follow from thence that presbyters ordained. It is possible that all who were employed in the sacred function were ordained by other bishops: nay, and that the thing was actually so, the principles of that age hardly leave us room to doubt. See the story of Frumentius, in Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History.

(2). We learn from Socrates, Theodoret, and Sozomen, that before Ulphilas, Theophilus governed the Churches of the Goths. Nor yet will this furnish Blondel, as he flatters himself, with any stronger argument against us; for neither has he proved, nor will his followers ever be able to prove, that this Theophilus was consecrated by presbyters.

(3). Neither Socrates, nor Sozomen, nor Theodoret, nor Philostorgius mentions so much as one deacon, much less a priest, nor so much as one priest, much less a bishop, to have been ordained by these Gothic presbyters. What, therefore, is to be gathered from the Goths? That presbyters in the fourth century had a power of ordaining? By no means. This learned man wearies himself to no purpose; it is to no purpose that he endeavours with so much subtilty, and with such an immense variety of learning, to defend a most senseless cause. The cause of the presbyterians is not capable of being defended.

4. But let us proceed to the abbot Daniel, ordained by Paphnutius, a presbyter. In the first place I will produce the passage of Cassian. "He was preferred (says he) to the office of a deacon by blessed Paphnutius, a presbyter of the same retirement, and that when he was inferior in years to many. For the holy Paphnutius had so much regard to his virtues, as to hasten to make him equal to himself in the order of priesthood, whom he knew to be equal in merits and grace; for, not bearing that he should continue any longer in an inferior ministry, and desiring to provide himself a fit successor in his own lifetime, he advanced him to the honour of presbyter." From this passage, forsooth, it manifestly appears, that the presbyter Paphnutius consecrated Daniel a presbyter. I must own that my eyes are too weak to discern any such consequence. Daniel was preferred to the dignity of presbyter by Paphnutius; therefore Paphnutius ordained him. I doubt this is no demonstration. Well, let us go on. But Paphnutius advanced him to the honour of presbyter. What then? Did he therefore consecrate him? O Blondel! I congratulate you with that new logic of yours, which has taught you to frame such wonderful, such unusual, and such illogical consequences. But to be serious. In the ecclesiastical writers, men are most frequently said to be preferred or advanced by those who recommend or elect them. So that from this kind of expressions it is in vain for any one to argue who has a mind to persuade either himself or others. We are also taught, by the very rules of St. Benedict, that the abbot chooses out of his own order such as are worthy to perform the priest's office. The matter, therefore, at last comes to this: Paphnutius, being induced by Daniel's virtues, commends him to the bishop, and the bishop makes him a presbyter.

5. It only remains that I say something of the pseudo-bishops; and, to dispatch the matter in few words, I say this: that these pseudo-bishops were really bishops, honoured with episcopal ordination, and were only called pseudo-bishops because they were not bishops of that place, because they had violated the canons, and because they had ordained ecclesiastics, contrary to the practice of the Church. Why did not Blondel prove these pseudo-bishops to be mere presbyters? Nothing could have made more for his purpose. But this learned man knew very well that he could never be able to prove this; therefore, with a conscious silence, he disingenuously concealed the senseless fallacy. What, I beseech you, may be observed more frequently, than that those are called pseudo-bishops who are not canonically ordained, although by their own bishops, or who exercise their episcopal power out of their own dioceses? This appears very evident from St. Cyprian alone.

I had perfectly forgot the ridiculous story of the Culdees, and the argument drawn from that story, which is no less ridiculous. The presbyterians are wonderfully fond of these Culdees, with their cowls, and none more than our Blondel. And thus he speaks: "That the first Church of the Scots was in the same condition with the Goths, is the opinion of John Fordon and John Mayor, two writers of that courageous nation." Well, I grant that it is possible that those courageous Scottish Churches were in the same condition with the Churches of the Goths. But what follows from hence? That presbyters had power to ordain? Nothing less. Neither the Gothic presbyters, nor the Scottish, ever ordained bishops or priests. Neither Fordon, nor Mayor, nor Boëthius says anything of the ordination of presbyters.

It remains, therefore, a certain and unshaken truth, that no ordinations were admitted by the primitive Church, but such as were administered by bishops. I come next to my second proposition, which is this.

II. That all the holy fathers, to a man, who speak of ordination, do speak of it as of a power appropriated only to bishops.

Thus St. Jerome declares in most express words: "What (says he) can a bishop do, which a presbyter does not, except ordination only?" Therefore, in St. Jerome's opinion, ordination does so properly belong to bishops, that a presbyter dares by no means usurp it; nor is there any reason that, with Blondel, we should suppose that the holy father had respect only to his own times, and to the practice of the Church in the fourth century. There is nothing that any way upholds this supposition: for if St. Jerome himself had known that presbyters, even in the most ancient

times, had ever exercised the power of ordaining, it is hardly credible that he would have omitted that, when nothing could be alleged more material to his purpose, which was to make presbyters equal to bishops.

St. Chrysostom comments upon 1 Tim. iv. 14, in these words : “ He does not speak here of presbyters, but of bishops ; for the presbyters did not ordain the bishop.” Nothing can be more evident than that the holy father spoke of ordinations administered in the times of the apostles. In the judgment, therefore, of St. Chrysostom, the power of ordaining was appropriated to bishops in the very age of the apostles.

Hereto may be added the words of St. Epiphanius, speaking concerning the Arian heresy, which are very full to our purpose. Arius argues thus : “ In what particular does a bishop excel a presbyter ? There is no difference between the one and the other ; for they are both of the same order, both have the same honour and dignity. The bishop ordains, and so does the presbyter,” &c. In the first place St. Epiphanius calls this a “ mad assertion of Arius, and the utmost degree of folly, to say that a bishop and a presbyter are equal ; for every wise man (says he) will easily perceive that nothing is more foolish than to attempt to make them equal.” And the most learned father proceeds thus : “ And how is this possible ? for the bishops’ order is to propagate fathers ; for it begets fathers to the Church. But the order of presbyters, unable to beget fathers, does, by the laver of regeneration, beget children to the Church ; but neither fathers nor teachers. And how was it possible for him to constitute a presbyter who had not received imposition of hands (and therewith authority) to ordain ?” From this passage many considerations do naturally arise, that yield a wonderful confirmation to my proposition. For from hence it appears—

1st. That Arius was ranked among the heretics.

2ndly. That he was ranked among them for this very reason, because he made presbyters equal to bishops. So also St. Augustin, in his treatise concerning heretics, condemns Arius, because he had asserted, “ that there ought to be no difference made between a bishop and a presbyter.”

3rdly. That, by the principles of the fourth century, a presbyter, as such, cannot ordain.

4thly. That the reason why presbyters cannot ordain is, because they have not received imposition of hands, or power to ordain.

5thly. From all which it likewise follows, that to presbyters, as such, the holy Scriptures have not committed any power of ordaining.

My second proposition does therefore hold good, viz., that all the holy fathers, to a man, who speak of ordination, do speak of it as of a power appropriated only to bishops. I proceed to the third, which is this—

III. That ordinations attempted by the insolent temerity of presbyters were always invalid upon that very account, that they were administered by presbyters, who have not the least authority in this matter.

This proposition is abundantly demonstrated by the famous example of Ischyra, who was therefore replaced among the laics, because he had been consecrated by Colluthus, an imaginary bishop. But, because Blondel has taken a great deal of pains to deprive us of this instance, it will be necessary to enquire into it a little more particularly. I shall, therefore, in the first place, faithfully relate the whole story of Ischyra from St. Athanasius, and afterwards consider Blondel's objections, on which he lays so much stress. What St. Athanasius has written, concerning the ordination of Colluthus, is in his apology against the Arians. "But because Colluthus (says he) died a presbyter, both all his ordinations were inauthoritative, and all that were ordained by him and his schism were become laics again. For he was ordained by Colluthus, a presbyter, that personated a bishop, and was lately enjoined by Hosius in a general council, and by the bishops there assembled, to demean himself as a presbyter, such as he was before. In like manner Ischyra himself was reckoned a laic."

From these words of St. Athanasius I collect—

1st. That Colluthus was a mere presbyter when he died.

2ndly. That for that reason all his ordinations were invalid, and all the persons ordained by him were remanded among the laics.

3rdly. That, being but a presbyter, he pretended to be a bishop; but had never been dignified with the episcopal order, and was only an imaginary, and no real bishop *ἐφαντίζετο ὑπισκοπῶν*, that is, among his own friends and companions he feigned himself a bishop, and gloried in it.

4thly. That it was decreed by Hosius and the Council of Alexandria, that he should remain a presbyter as he was before. Where it is to be most carefully observed, that Colluthus was not degraded from the episcopal order, as one that had truly received it, but only deprived of an imaginary title which he had insolently arrogated to himself. It was decreed that he should remain a presbyter; because he was never consecrated bishop, viz., by the imposition of bishop's hands. From hence it is to me most evident, that, in the judgment of the primitive Church,

the ordinations of presbyters were invalid and null, for that very reason, because they were administered by presbyters. The assertors of the equality of the clergy shall never wrest from us this instance, which is so full and clear against them. But let us see what Blondel has been able to allege against most evident history—a man, indeed, of very great learning, but too much addicted to the faction of the Calvinists.

There are three things which this most learned adversary produces to enervate the force of this example, viz. :

1. That Colluthus was not a presbyter, but a bishop in the Upper Cynus, consecrated by Meletius.

2. That he did not cease to be a bishop till he was deposed by Hosius and the synod of Alexandria.

3. That Ischyras was therefore replaced among the laics, not because he had been ordained by a presbyter, but because he had been ordained uncanonically by a bishop, contrary to the canons and established usage of the Church.

To these three objections I answer—

1. It appears, from Alexander's circular letter, that there was one Colluthus, a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria. That this was the same with our Colluthus, who ordained Ischyras, is manifestly attested by St. Epiphanius, whose authority Blondel does in vain endeavour to enervate. We read that *Colluthus* was constituted a bishop in the Upper Cynus, but not *Colluthus*. Either Blondel is miserably blind, or he imposes upon his followers what he sees and knows to be false.

2. It is as clear as the light, from the very words of St. Athanasius, that, before the synod of Alexandria, Colluthus was by no means a bishop: for pray let us reflect a little: "By Colluthus, a presbyter, that personated a bishop, and lately by a general council," &c. He that personated a bishop was not a true and real, but only a fictitious and imaginary bishop. Colluthus, even before the assembling of the synod of Alexandria, did only personate a bishop, only counterfeited and boasted himself to be a bishop, when he was but a mere presbyter. Therefore the Alexandrian synod did not deprive him of the episcopal order, which he had never received; but openly pronounced that he was by no means a bishop—that he was nothing more than a mere presbyter, because he was never ordained by a bishop.

3. From hence it naturally follows, that Ischyras was put back among the laics, because he was consecrated by a pseudo-bishop, not only an uncanonical, but a false and fictitious bishop.

And having thus both confirmed and illustrated my three propositions, I shall not fear boldly to assert, that ordinations

belong only to bishops, and that ordinations administered by mere presbyters are, upon that very account, void, invalid, and null.

But before I conclude this dissertation, it will not be either unprofitable or foreign to my purpose to make some few observations concerning the order of deacons: for there are some who dream that the deacons order is only a temporary and civil office, by no means to be reckoned among such as are ecclesiastical.

This, therefore, shall be my last proposition.

IV The order of deacons, instituted in the sixth chapter of the Acts, is not civil and temporary, but is spiritual and perpetual.

1st. The apostles require that the persons to be chosen to this office should be "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom;" that is, that they should be endowed with extraordinary gifts, and well instructed in the holy Scriptures, viz., in the Old Testament, especially in the prophecies, that they might be able, as often as occasion should offer, to dispute with the Jews, as St. Stephen did. Does not this seem to suppose something more excellent than the office of a steward? What are extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and a full knowledge of God's word, requisite to the discharge of that office? I am very much mistaken, if an honest mind, and a well approved integrity, be not abundantly sufficient for that employment.

2ndly. Deacons were instituted to serve tables, and had their name from thence. But the tables of the disciples (as the great Bishop Pearson rightly observes) were common and sacred; that is, they celebrated the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in common, each contributing his symbol to the feast of charity. It is very credible that these deacons assisted the apostles in the celebration of it, and distributed the consecrated elements among the faithful. This is most certain, that in the time of Justin Martyr, that office belonged to the deacons. "The president (says he) or bishop having blessed or consecrated the bread, and wine, and water, those that are by us called deacons distribute them to every one present."

3rdly. They were ordained by imposition of hands of the apostles, in the very same manner that priests and bishops are ordained. But this ceremony, which is so solemn, would certainly never have been used for the designation of a civil and temporal office.

4thly. Add to all this, that soon after Stephen preached the Gospel, and Philip administered baptism to the eunuch. These several particulars, as far as I can judge, do most evidently denote an ecclesiastical office.

"They (says the apostle) that have used the office of a deacon

well, purchase to themselves a good degree;" that is, a degree towards the order of presbyter: for that was the custom of those ages, to choose deacons out of the best of the Christian people, presbyters out of the best deacons, and out of the best presbyters to elect presidents or bishops. In the Clementine Constitutions there are prayers for a deacon, in which are these words: "Grant that he, having administered the office committed to him agreeably, constantly, unblameably, and irreproveably, may be thought worthy of a greater degree."

But, besides all this, let us enquire what opinion concerning this office was held by pious and uncorrupt antiquity. That the holy apostles did in all Churches, together with bishops and presbyters, also constitute deacons, appears from St. Clemens, Romanus, and from Hermas Pastor. But what sentiments the primitive Church had concerning deacons, you will easily judge from the following citations out of the holy fathers.

St. Polycarp, in his epistle to the Philippians, exhorts the deacons to behave themselves unblameably, as the deacons or ministers of God in Christ, and not of men.

St. Ignatius, in his epistle to the Trallians, has these words: "And deacons, being the mystery (or rather ministers of the mysteries) of Jesus Christ, ought by all means to please all men; for they are not dispensers of meat and drink, but ministers of the Church of God."

St. Cyprian speaks thus of deacons: "But deacons ought to remember that the Lord chose apostles; that is, bishops and governors: but, after the Lord's ascension into heaven, the apostles constituted deacons for themselves, to be attendants upon them as bishops, and upon the church." What does it signify to proceed farther, and weary the reader with a long enumeration of authors? From these three most clear evidences of the truly apostolic traditions, it is abundantly manifest that deacons are not servants of tables, as some triflers among us assert, but attendants of the bishops and of the church; and consequently are, with the bishops and the church, to continue unto the end.

THE RIGHT OF THE CHURCH

TO EXCOMMUNICATE.

BY THE REVEREND GEORGE HICKES, D.D.

IN the former dissertations I have, I hope, fully and copiously proved that the Christian Church is the true and proper society, distinct and separate from the civil society, and administered by governors of her own; and from those premises it always appeared to me to follow, that the right of excommunication belongs to her: for we must either deny that the Church of Christ is a society, which the followers of Erastus are for the most part used to deny; or, if we grant this, we must also acknowledge that this society comprises in it a power of excommunicating. Nothing can be imagined more clear and evident than this; and yet such is the wicked perverseness of mankind, that there are not wanting such, as do not only deny this power to the Church, but also maintain, with great vehemence, that it is both ridiculous and absurd. And, indeed, they have endeavoured, with the greatest zeal and earnestness, to show that this tyrannical opinion, as they are pleased to call it, cannot be defended either by reason, or by the holy Scriptures, or by the example and authority of the primitive Church. For this reason, I might seem to be very much wanting to my purpose, if I should pass by a controversy of so great moment and importance without taking notice of it. It shall therefore be my province to show, clearly and distinctly, and yet in a few words, how much support this cause of ours receives, both from reason, and from holy Scripture, and lastly from the examples of the purest ages: and I cannot but entertain the strongest hopes that all these do make very much for us and our case.

I affirm, therefore, that the right of excommunication belongs to the Church by divine right: and this I shall endeavour to prove from these following arguments.

I. My first argument shall be drawn from the very nature of society. That the Christian religion is a true and proper, although it be a spiritual society, is so clear and evident, that nothing can be more; for it is not by any means sufficient for our salvation to give credit to the Gospel, and conform our lives according to the moral precepts contained therein: it is also necessary for us to join ourselves to the Church of Christ, that

we may partake of the sacraments which Christ instituted for that end, that they may be conveyances of grace to us, without which we cannot please God. To say all in one word, Jesus Christ, God-man, by the merits of his passion, has obtained for us reconciliation and forgiveness of sins: but he has so annexed this forgiveness of sins to his sacraments instituted in his Church, that we must not so much as hope for this forgiveness without the participation of those sacraments. And this sufficiently demonstrates the Christian religion to be a true and proper society.

It cannot be denied that every society whatsoever has all those things which are necessarily required to preserve the society safe and entire; but, for preserving a society safe and entire, it is in the first place required that it have a power of receiving worthy and fit persons into the society, and of turning out such as are refractory and unworthy. All men must necessarily grant me this; without this power it is not possible for any, even the least, society to subsist.

The Christian Church is a true and proper society; therefore it is necessary that the Christian Church have the same power of admitting worthy and fit persons, and of ejecting, that is, of excommunicating, such as are obstinate.

Hence likewise we may collect, that this power of excommunication appertains to the Church by divine right; for since the Christian Church is a true and proper society, founded by God himself, it most evidently follows, that God has granted to this society all those privileges which are necessary to preserve it as a society; therefore it is very well observed by the learned Grotius, that, for the asserting of this power to the Church of Christ, it is not necessary to descend to particular passages of holy Scripture. This is abundantly demonstrated from the very nature of society; and, indeed, this right of excommunicating appears so necessary—I will not say to the Christian Church, but to every religion whatsoever—that you will hardly find one sect, or way of worship, even among the heathen, that does not enjoy the like privilege. We are informed by Julius Cæsar, that the Druids were wont to exclude those from their sacrifices who did not observe their decrees. In Philip of Macedon's Epistle to the Athenians we read, “that the people were so exasperated against the Megarenses, because they had killed Anthemocritus, as to exclude them from their mysteries.” And the Scholiast of Aristophanes observes, “that it was the custom that murderers should not partake of the sacrifices.” Nicolaus Damascenus says of the Cerceti, a people of India, “that they shut out from their holy rites such as had any way injured them.” It is a thing most notorious, that before the

sacrifices were slain, a crier made proclamation with a loud voice, "Away, far away, ye profane; shut the doors upon the profane." From all which it most evidently appears, that all sects of men whatever have enjoyed this power, viz., of excluding from the sacrifices the profane, the impure, the unholy, and of ejecting them out of their society. Such instances do by no means prove, what this vile factor of the Atheists would prove from them, that the Christian Church borrowed this tyrannical custom, as he calls it, from the heathen: but they manifestly prove that excommunication is so necessary to all sorts of religion, that the heathen themselves did, by the light of nature, both find out and exercise that power. Indeed it appears to me very hard and unjust to deny the Christian religion, which was constituted by Christ himself, that very power which the wiser heathens most freely allowed, even to the foolishlest religions in the world.

Supposing, therefore, that the Christian religion is a true society, no man, that has not finally bid adieu to all modesty, can deny that the right of excommunication belongs to it by divine right.

And here peradventure those various instances, mentioned in Sacred Writ, might not be improperly alleged, by which it appears that the apostles themselves exercised this power for which we contend. I will content myself with only one of them, that of the incestuous Corinthian. St. Paul reproves the Corinthians, that they had not mourned for that wicked person, who was just going to be removed from the Church: for the holy apostle had resolved to take away this most grievous sinner from among them, to cast him out of the Church, and to deliver him unto Satan. But for what purpose was this? To what end does the apostle do it? To wit, that the incestuous person, being broken and softened by this severe discipline, might return to a better life; that the Church might suffer no damage; that the sounder part might not be infected with this corrupt example—for rotten fruit is apt to infect that which is sound, and bad example does wonderfully weaken such as stagger and are infirm, and gives a tincture even to the best. "A little leaven (says the apostle) leaveneth the whole lump." Let us now consider, if you please, the reason of the apostolic censure. The incestuous person is, by the apostle's command, thrown out of the Church of Corinth—that is to say, is excommunicated; and he is excommunicated for these two reasons: 1st. That he might repent, and return to the right way. 2nd. That with his pollution he might not infect other Christians, particularly such as were weak. But these very reasons will always continue the

same in the Christian Church ; therefore this power of excommunicating will be always necessary in this Church.

I cannot here pass by in silence a famous objection, first made by Erastus himself, and since stolen from him by all that have pleaded the same cause. The objection is this, that none ought to be excluded from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, because no such command occurs in the holy Scriptures ; nay, if they, good men, are not miserably mistaken, we find commands there which are directly contrary. " Let a man examine himself (says the apostle), and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." None must approach unworthily to the holy table ; but it is in the power of each particular Christian to judge whether he be unworthy or no. The Church has no authority in this matter, say they—the bishops have none. This objection, as much as it may at first sight appear to favour the Erastians, has nothing solid in it, and is very easily confuted ; for I will take this for granted, which I have most fully proved, that the right of excommunication belongs to the Church. If, therefore, the Christian Church can exclude out of her society persons that are wicked and profligate, she can also reject them from the holy eucharist. The participation of this blessed sacrament is the greatest privilege of the Christian Church ; but he that is, for a just cause, deprived of the holy society of the Church, is also deservedly deprived of the participation of this sacrament. Our adversaries, therefore, who make this objection, do nothing but miserably trifle ; for they must either prove that the Church of Christ cannot cut off her rotten members with the spiritual sword, or remain eternally silent, and, at least, with their silence, confess themselves overcome.

II. My second argument I take from baptism : " Go ye therefore (says our blessed Saviour to his apostles), and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." From these words it is plain that Jesus Christ gave his apostles and their successors command, by this sacrament of baptism, to admit all persons whatsoever into the Church, with this condition and proviso, that they should promise most religiously to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded ; for which reason the apostles had, and their successors have, not only power of administering baptism, but also power of judging who are worthy to be admitted into the spiritual society, and who are incapable and unworthy. Those whom they judge worthy, they do, by baptism, most willingly make partakers of the heavenly rewards ; but such as they find to be unworthy, they either wholly reject,

or subject them to farther discipline. And that the primitive Church always exercised this power is abundantly manifest, from that severe and most wholesome discipline which was observed with regard to the catechumens—that is, such as were candidates for baptism. They were admitted into the Church very late: first exercised during a space of many years; macerated with continual fasting; instructed and confirmed by frequent exhortations—after all which, they obtained the freedom of the Christian city. Now from this power I argue, that the Church has right of excommunication; for it is one and the same power, but administered after a various manner, and by a different method. They who have power of denying admission by baptism to such as they shall judge to be unfit or incapable, have not they also power of expelling them that are admitted if they prove contumacious—if they violate and trample under their feet the fundamental conditions of the society? If we allow them one of these powers, the other will follow of course, and cannot be denied them. Since, therefore, it is agreed on all sides that Jesus Christ committed power to the clergy to admit all such persons into his Church as they should find to be fit and worthy, it cannot be doubted but he also gave them power to cut off from it such as should prove wicked and contumacious.

III. My third argument is borrowed from the holy Scripture: “And I will give unto thee (says our blessed Saviour to Saint Peter) the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.”

I assert that, in these words, Jesus Christ committed to his Church a full power of excommunicating.

It is, if I am not mistaken, sufficiently agreed among Protestants, that the power which is comprehended in these words, whatsoever that power be, was not delivered to St. Peter alone, as the Papists maintain; but did likewise belong to all the rest of the apostles, without exception.

It will also be granted me, that this power did not expire with the apostles, but is to continue to the end of the world. Having premised this, I shall now apply myself to explain the words themselves: but, for the more clear understanding of our Saviour's meaning, we must remember that these words, which he made use of in this place, were taken from Isaiah's prophecy, where there is this passage: “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.” The prophet speaks of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, who the Lord foretold should come to the kingdom of Israel. Isaiah describes to us the king-

dom, or the right of governing by the key of the house of David, and the power of opening and shutting. It is very manifest that these expressions denote the highest exercise of royal authority; and, therefore, what man in his senses can doubt, but these very words used by our blessed Saviour, since they are so apparently taken from this passage of Isaiah, do signify a certain royal authority in that spiritual kingdom, the foundation of which he was going to lay in his own blood?

What, I beseech you, can be understood by the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and by the power of opening and shutting, but the highest exercise of government? If the passage be taken in this sense, there is nothing in it but what is clear and perspicuous; but if the words are wrested to any other meaning, they will appear harsh, foolish, and ridiculous.

But the followers of Erastus object, that the expressions of *loosing* and *binding* do signify nothing else but the explication of what is lawful or not lawful; and this is explained by preaching the Gospel of Christ. Such expressions occur very frequently in the Mishnah and Talmud, and in the rabbinical writers, as Dr. Lightfoot, an author of very great knowledge in that kind of learning, has, by a long induction of examples, shown upon this very text. I own that this is the common subterfuge to which all our adversaries have recourse. This objection is made by Erastus and Selden, and all the other writers against the Christian priesthood. But, as plausible as it may appear, I make no doubt of utterly overthrowing it.

I acknowledge that the expressions of binding and loosing are used by the Talmudists in this sense: but I positively deny that these words, as they are used by our Saviour, are to be interpreted the same way: for—

Ist. It is to no purpose to produce so many examples of this kind out of the rabbins, as Dr. Lightfoot has done, even till one is sick of them, though otherwise a man of great learning, yet too much addicted to the dreams of the Gemara: “for (as the learned Mr. Dodwell observes) ever since the use of the sacerdotal power has been lost among the Jews, they have also lost the very knowledge of that power.” Therefore it is of little importance in this controversy what these expressions signify in the Talmudists. Who does not know that the rabbins have, ever since the destruction of the temple, been groping in more than Egyptian darkness, and have invented I know not what monstrous fictions, with which their writings do everywhere abound?

Such declarations as these are derived from the six hundred and thirty precepts, and from that power which the Jewish

priests had of explaining and determining all things, which the law of Moses had not determined; as may be seen in Deuteronomy. But since these six hundred and thirty precepts are abolished by the Gospel of Christ, and that power which was exercised by the Jewish priests does nowhere appear, it is not any way possible that we should thus interpret this passage. Nay, it is necessary that we find out another interpretation of it, and that altogether different from this.

2ndly. Besides, it ought to be observed (for it is certainly most observable) that this power of binding or loosing is the power of the keys. As often as the priest either binds or looses a sinner, he uses the keys of the kingdom of heaven—he shuts and opens. I desire, therefore, that we may be allowed to explain the expressions of binding and loosing, which may seem obscure, by that of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which is most clear and perspicuous. And then nothing can be more evident, than that by the keys of the kingdom of heaven is meant the government and power of the Christian Church: for which reason I must insist upon it, that the expressions of binding and loosing be so understood as to agree with this power of the keys. This is farther confirmed by that passage of St. John, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” To bind, therefore, and to loose, is the same as to remit sins and to retain them. And, indeed, in all the New Testament, to remit or forgive sins, signifies nothing else but to wipe out sins, to abolish both the punishment and guilt of them, and that authoritatively. “Son, be of good cheer (says our blessed Saviour to the man sick of the palsy), thy sins be forgiven thee.”

3rdly. I am thoroughly persuaded that the explication which I have given of this place is true, because it is confirmed both by the opinion and by the practice of the primitive Church. The Catholic Church has always claimed this authority, from the times of the apostles down to ours; and, as often as occasion required, has exercised it.

The primitive Church always laid claim to this power of excommunication, and claimed it as committed to the Church by Jesus Christ in this very passage: and, which is yet more, did not always exercise this power, but accused all those of heresy who attempted either to take it away or to weaken it. This is most evidently attested, both by the Montanists and by the Novatians.

That the primitive Church claimed this authority will appear, first, from the most express testimonies of the Fathers; secondly, from the penitential canons, which almost all councils,

as well general as provincial, have made; thirdly, from the schisms which in the most ancient times were formed upon this occasion, viz., those of Montanus and Novatian.

1st. Let us look into the most express testimonies of the holy Fathers. Tertullian, in the apology which he drew up for the Christian faith, describes the Church of Christ after this manner: "We are a body, from the agreement of our religion, and the unity of our discipline, and the covenant of hope. There (that is, in the sacred assembly) there are exhortations, reproofs, and a divine censure: for judgment is passed with great solemnity, as among persons persuaded of God's presence at the sentence; and it is a very great prejudice or ruled case against the future judgment, if any one have so offended as to be banished from the communication of prayers, from the public assembly, and from all sacred commerce." From this one passage, which is so very full and express, these three particulars may, I think, be very easily deduced. First, that the power of excommunicating such as were contumacious prevailed in the age of Tertullian. Secondly, that this was a primary part of the Christian discipline, which they did not institute by any compact among themselves, but received as delivered down to them from the very apostles. Thirdly, that the effect of excommunication was, that it excluded from the kingdom of heaven: "for it was the highest predetermination of the future judgment, if any one did so offend, as to be banished from all sacred commerce."

Next to Tertullian, let us hear his scholar, St. Cyprian, in whom we meet with so many and such excellent passages in proof of the authority of the Church, that it is difficult to determine which we ought chiefly to make choice of. This most holy martyr wrote a whole book concerning the lapsed, in which he rebukes them with the greatest severity, for daring to receive the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper so hastily and rashly, before they had performed their penance. The whole argument of this book supposes that the Church has power to shut out from the holy communion such as are unworthy, and have the stains of grievous sins upon them, until they have cleansed themselves by due penance, and made themselves worthy of the most holy mysteries. He inveighs most severely against the lapsed, and asserts that they "had offered violence to the body and blood of Christ, in that they had communicated before their crimes were expiated—before they had made confession of their sin—before their conscience was purged with the sacrifice and absolution of the bishop." And, almost at the end of the book, he earnestly exhorts them "every one to confess his sin, while he is still in this life—while his confession may be admitted—

and while the satisfaction and remission administered by priests is acceptable to God." In his tenth epistle he treats upon the same subject, and has these words: "For seeing the sinners do for less sins perform penance for a certain time, and, according to the order of discipline, come to confession, and, by imposition of hands from the bishop and clergy, receive right of communicating," &c.

From these two passages it manifestly appears, that it was the practice of the Church, in the age of St. Cyprian, to debar sinners from the eucharist; to lay them under ecclesiastical censures, till they had performed the penance imposed upon them; and after that, by imposition of hands from either the bishop or presbyter, to admit them to the participation of the holy communion.

Having thus shown, from most clear passages both of Tertullian and St. Cyprian, that this power of excommunication was administered in the third century, let us go farther back to the Fathers of the second, and even of the first century, who all acknowledged the same discipline.

St. Irenæus relates that the wife of a certain deacon, having been corrupted and defiled by Marcion, the heretic (and magician), did at last, by the great labour of her friends, return to a good life, and "spent all her time in confessing, and lamenting, and bewailing the defilement which she had suffered from the magician." The word *ἑξομολόγησις*, as Morinus learnedly observes, sometimes denotes only that part of penance which we commonly call confession: but sometimes it signifies the whole course of penance, finished and perfect in all its parts; and in my opinion confession is to be taken in this latter sense: and then Irenæus's meaning will be, that this unhappy woman was never reconciled to the Church, but spent all the remaining part of her life in penance, prayers, tears, and fasting. And, indeed, this agrees perfectly well with the discipline of the primitive Church, which never admitted the more grievous sinners (such as idolators and the like) to her communion till the very moment before their death. No man of learning, and conversant in the sacred monuments of the Church, can doubt, but this passage of St. Irenæus does abundantly prove that the power of excommunication obtained at that time. It will not be foreign to my purpose to write down what Feuardentius has observed upon the place. "The Greek and Latin Fathers (says he) have very unanimously called that *exhomologesis*, or confession, by which any one does, after baptism, ingenuously own himself to be guilty of many sins—not only before God, or by making a general confession, but also before the governors of the Church,

so as to comprise an open and distinct enumeration of all his offences. And that this is, by Christ's prescription, and the practice of the apostles, and the consent of all the Churches throughout the world, a necessary means to wash away sins, and the second plank, as it were, after shipwreck, is evident from this chapter." Besides, he cites St. Augustine's forty-ninth homily, Tertullian de Penitentiâ, and St. Cyprian de Lapsis. "From all which (as the very learned Dr. Grabe has judiciously observed) the most ancient practice and the usefulness of that kind of confession may be gathered; but not the absolute necessity of it to wash off the stain of sin."

But let us go up a little higher. If I be not mistaken, St. Hermas, in his Pastor, will discover to us very clear footsteps of this discipline. In his second book, in that section where he speaks of putting away an adulteress, there is this passage: "What if the woman that is put away should repent, and have a mind to return to her husband, shall not she be received by her husband? And he said to me, 'Yes; if her husband shall not receive her, he sins, and commits a great crime; for he ought to receive a sinner that has repented, but not often; for there is but one repentance to the servants of God.'" Without all controversy, this most ancient writer must be understood concerning the public repentance by which a sinner is reconciled to the Church: for he says that there is but one repentance to the servants of God. Now whoever affirmed that of private repentance which regards God only? Nay, the Novatians themselves granted, that in the infinite mercy of God there was hope placed for all men, even for the most grievous sinners: but they denied that, after baptism, any one guilty of very grievous sins ought to be received to the communion of the Church. Daillé, to the best of my remembrance, or Blondel, or one of that famous triumvirate, who have waged a most deadly war against the holy Fathers, accuses St. Hermas of Novatianism, for this one sentence, that "there is only one repentance to the servants of God." But the learned man is under a wretched mistake, and seems not to have sufficiently comprehended in what chiefly the error of Novatian consisted. Both the Catholics and the Novatians acknowledge that all sins whatsoever are wholly washed away and abolished by the most wholesome laver of baptism: but the Novatians maintain that a man, falling, after baptism, into a grievous and mortal sin, has no hope left—that there is no returning for him into the Church; from which, therefore, they utterly cast him out, and think he is to be left to the mercy of God only. On the contrary, it was always asserted, by the Catholic Church, that repentance is not to be

denied to any sinner, and that the gates of the Church ought always to lie open to all contrite hearts and truly humble souls. Yet we must own that many, very many, of the most ancient Fathers were of opinion, that it was not by any means safe to allow a second repentance to idolators, and such like grievous sinners. Of this number was St. Hermas's Pastor. But consider the vast difference between the Novatians and the Catholics. The Novatians allowed of no repentance after baptism: the Catholics permitted one repentance to all, even the most grievous sinners; and some that were of a milder disposition than ordinary, and more sensible of the weakness of human nature, indulged a frequent repetition of that repentance. But let us hear what Petavius, a man of very great learning, determines concerning the error of Novatian, in his notes upon Epiphanius, where he treats of that heresy. "We must know (says he) that Novatus and Novatian were accounted heretics, and banished from the Catholic Church, not because they denied that the lapsed were to be admitted to the communion and peace of the Church, but because they perfidiously and inhumanly asserted that the Church had no right to reconcile such, and forgive them. The Novatians, I say, were condemned as heretics, because, to omit their other errors, they took the power of the keys, as it is called, away from the Church and clergy. Otherwise to banish for ever from the Church the lapsed, that is, such as were polluted with the contagion of idolatry, was not as yet known to be an heretical decree. Besides, that, in those ancient and flourishing times of the Church, some certain degrees of sinners were banished from communion, and that for ever, is declared by very many councils and testimonies of the holy Fathers." Thus that great author, Petavius, who as he was conversant in all sorts of learning, so there is none in which he did not excel.

Therefore there is no reason to accuse St. Hermas of Novatianism. For this certainly we are obliged to him, that he has so evidently proved public penance to have been both known and practised in the very times of the apostles.

All this may be confirmed from the apostolical canons, as they are commonly called. That the apostles themselves were the authors of these canons, no man in his wits can so much as dream. But that they are very ancient, and contain the usages of the primitive Church in the second and third centuries, has been demonstrated by so many and such convincing arguments by the great Bishop Beveridge, that there is not the least room left to doubt it. The twelfth canon is in these words: "If any clergyman or laic that is excommunicated, or not yet received

into communion, shall go and be received in another city without communicatory letters, let both him that receives him be excommunicated, and him that is received. But if he were excommunicated before, let his excommunication be extended to a longer time." From this single canon may be drawn a new argument, grounded on those letters of form, which the canon styles *γράμματα Συναγωγῆς*, communicatory or commendatory letters. By the use of these letters those venerable prelates did admirably consult the unity of the Church. He that communicated with any one Church, had right to communicate with all the Churches dispersed and scattered over all the face of the whole earth. He that was cut off from any one Church, could be received by no other. Now from whence was this? Whence came it that all the Churches throughout the world agreed in this point, to preserve so strict an unity among themselves? That they all exercised the same discipline, so that what was done by any one of them was ratified and confirmed by all the rest—from whence, I say, did this proceed? "From a certain private contract made amongst the primitive Christians," says Mr. Selden, that most bitter enemy to the authority of the Church. But how does Mr. Selden prove this? With what testimonies does he defend this new conjecture of his? With none at all. At what time was this compact made? That he does not know. Which of the holy Fathers, and of the ecclesiastical historians, make any mention of this famous compact? Not so much as one of them. Can there be any time assigned wherein the Christian Church did not maintain this unity, and exercise this discipline? No such matter. Therefore, with good Mr. Selden's leave, I shall be of the same opinion with St. Augustine, that that whose original we cannot trace out, and which is owing to no decrees of councils, but has obtained all over the whole Christian world—I shall believe, I say, with St. Augustine, that "that was not instituted by man, but delivered down by the apostles themselves."

Nor, indeed, are the apostolic constitutions to be passed by unmentioned in this controversy. Not that I think they were either written by the apostles, or collected into one body by St. Clement, as a certain crazed mathematician is now undertaking to prove. But it was always the opinion of learned men, that many most useful monuments of antiquity are preserved in these constitutions, which explain and illustrate the rites and customs of the third and fourth centuries. It is, indeed, no contemptible consideration, that all the second book of these constitutions is employed wholly in this one argument. The whole purpose of it is to inform the bishops how they ought to

behave themselves, both in condemning and punishing sins; from which it easily appears what was the opinion of the Church in those ages concerning this controversy.

2ndly. That the Christian Church had the right of excommunication is also most evident from the penitential canons, which the primitive Church established. The council of Eliberis, if we credit Baronius, was convened in the year of our Lord 305, in the times of Constantius and Galerius. That which was chiefly done in this council, was to appoint certain and stated times of penance for almost all the more grievous sins. It was there decreed, "that idolators were not to receive the communion, even at the point of death: that he which should not come to church for three Sundays together, should be suspended from communion so long time as that he might appear sufficiently rebuked: that if the faithful give their daughters in marriage to heretics or Jews, they shall be suspended from communion for five years." To this council may be added that of Ancyra, and the first council of Arles, assembled under the reign of Constantine; in both which there are many canons of this nature. Now from all this it is very easy to collect what was the constant opinion of the primitive Church concerning excommunication: for we are not to imagine that the Church of Christ did then first exercise this power, because we meet with no penitential canons before those times. I have already proved the contrary from St. Cyprian, St. Irenæus, and St. Hermas's Pastor. Indeed, it always seemed to me a very great argument, that this power of the Church was made use of by the apostles themselves; because the whole multitude of the faithful did so very willingly submit their necks to so heavy a yoke. Good God! how many, and how great and bitter mortifications did they endure, before they were permitted to return to the Church! They spent whole days and nights in fasting, and lying upon the ground; nay, they employed all their wits to find out various methods of afflicting their souls and macerating their bodies. Nothing could be put upon them so hard, so grievous, and calamitous, but what they underwent in triumph, that they might atone for their sins, and obtain a right to communion. But is it credible or probable that the whole Christian world would have so cheerfully and willingly endured such severe mortifications, if they had not been thoroughly persuaded that this was that very discipline which was instituted by Jesus Christ, the lover of souls, to be, as it were, a plank after shipwreck, the most ready and wholesome cure of sins committed after baptism? Besides, I would ask, when did this unworthy and insupportable yoke begin to be first imposed on the necks of the primitive

Christians? By whose contrivance was it that this ecclesiastical tyranny first invaded the Christian world? It is most certain that no man can be found that will be able to give a clear and distinct answer to this question. I may likewise add, that it seems little less than a miracle that such a monstrous tyranny should have obtained so far and wide without any opposition whatsoever. With what madness was the laity possessed—with what timorousness of mind captivated, that they yielded so full and easy a victory to the ambition of the clergy? All this does most forcibly persuade us that this power of excommunication, which the Church always exercised, and without which it cannot subsist, was by no means invented and devised by ecclesiastical tyrants, but instituted by Jesus Christ himself, and delivered down and confirmed by the apostles.

Thus, if I am not mistaken, I have fully demonstrated, that the Church has always claimed the power of excommunication. But,

3rdly. It will add to the force of this argument if we call to mind that the primitive Church had so great an esteem for this power, that they marked all such as disowned it with a brand of heresy. No man, that is not altogether a stranger to the holy Fathers, can be ignorant what was the opinion of those of the third century concerning Montanus and Novatian. Both those heretics did, after the most friendly manner, agree in this one point—to take away the power of the keys from the Church and clergy. But herein the Novatians do greatly disagree with the heretics of our time, that they most freely allowed the power of excommunicating, and denied only that of reconciling to the Church: whereas these do utterly root up all power of excommunication, and maintain that even the most profligate persons imaginable have a right both to the Church and to the sacraments. So much, both in subtlety and impiety, have ours gone beyond the ancient heretics.

However, it will by no means be foreign to my purpose to show how, and with what arguments, the holy Fathers disputed against those heretics. And I shall the rather do this, because the Erastians object nothing against this most wholesome authority, but what their famous predecessors of old objected against the primitive Church. Hence also we shall more clearly and fully understand what were the sentiments of the purest antiquity concerning this important question.

1. The first that raised any disturbance upon this occasion was Montanus, who, in the reign of Commodus, invented many new and pernicious opinions, and, falling away from the Catholic Church, instituted a religion of his own. Among other things

he peremptorily denied that "mortal sins could be forgiven by the Church." This we are informed by Tertullian, in his treatise "*De Pudicitia*," which he composed after himself was become a Montanist; for what he wrote concerning the power of the keys in his tract entitled "*Scorpiace*," and in that "*De Pœnitentiâ*," is orthodox enough: "For who (says he) forgives sins but God alone? to wit, mortal sins, which have been committed against him, and against his temple.....Therefore, if it should appear that even the blessed apostles themselves had pardoned any such sin, the pardoning of which belonged to God, and not to man, they must have done that, not by discipline, but by power: for they also raised the dead, which only God can do; and gave new strength to the weak, which none can do but Christ; nay, and inflicted punishments, which Christ would not do." The Father here maintains, according to the opinion of Montanus, that the Church never received power of forgiving mortal sins. He openly declares that the arguments drawn from the examples of the apostles are of no force with him. If the apostles either bound or loosed a sinner, "they did this (says he) not by discipline, which was to remain always in the Church, but by their apostolic power, which expired in their persons." Zephyrinus, who at that time sat in the see of Rome, undertook the argument against Tertullian. This most holy Father affirmed that this authority had always prevailed in the Catholic Church, and was founded in that most ample commission which our blessed Saviour gave to St. Peter. Tertullian, to evade the force of this argument, asserts that this power was committed only to St. Peter, and could not be derived to others. Now this is apparently contrary both to reason and to the judgment of the whole Church. Nay, our modern Montanists and Novatians (for why should they not be adorned with the same names, since they vend the same opinions?) reject this subterfuge as trivial, and of no weight, and so expound this place as to make it denote no authority distinct from that of preaching the Gospel. But these things following, we learn most clearly from Tertullian, viz., that the Catholic Church assumed to herself a power of excommunication; and further, that she believed this power was given to her in that text of St. Matthew. Let the reader look into his book "*De Pudicitia*," and that entitled "*Scorpiace*," and he will easily find that even Tertullian himself was altogether of another opinion, whilst he remained within the bosom of the Catholic Church; and that he was indebted for this error concerning excommunication to Montanus, Prisca, and Maximilla. In his "*Scorpiace*" he writes thus: "For if you think heaven is still shut, remember

that the Lord has here left the keys to St. Peter, and by him to the Church; and that every one that is here examined and confesseth, shall carry them with him." Behold Tertullian in this passage strenuously contending for that very authority which he wrote against in his book "*De Pudicitia*."

2. Montanus was followed by Novatian, whose opinion upon this subject I have explained from the learned Petavius. Against him St. Pacianus and St. Ambrose disputed with very great vehemence. But let us see what forces they brought into the field, and with what art they were drawn up. St. Pacianus, in his epistle to Sempronianus, a follower of Novatus, says these things, which are not unworthy to be observed. First he introduces Sempronianus cavilling after this manner: "You will say none but God can do this" (he speaks of forgiving sins). Sempronianus, good man, was, it seems, most exactly of the same opinion with the sagacious Maximilla. But St. Pacianus answers him very well: "It is true (says he), but what God does by his priests, is also his power; for what is that which he says to the apostles? 'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.' Why did he say this, if it was not lawful for men to bind and loose? Was this only lawful for the apostles? Then to baptize also was lawful for none but them; they only had power to give the Holy Spirit; they only could cleanse the people from their sins: because all this was commanded only to the apostles." In his third epistle to Sempronianus, he defends that text in St. Matthew against his objections, and then explains the passage after this manner: "He is loosed by pardon, because he was bound by sin. He is bound by excommunication, because he was loosed by faith, and made free by grace." From these words of St. Pacianus we are taught, that at that time none but such as were open heretics, and enemies to the Christian Church, did in the least doubt but that this passage in St. Matthew related to excommunication, and to the public discipline of the Church. There are in these epistles very many things which make for this purpose; but these will suffice to show the judgment of the primitive Church.

And now let us hear St. Ambrose disputing with the same adversary. In his first book concerning repentance, he has these words: "But they say that they pay reverence to the Lord, to whom only they reserve the power of forgiving sins. On the contrary, they do a greater injury to none than to him, whose commands they would rescind, and throw back the power he has committed to them: for seeing that the Lord Jesus himself has said in his Gospel, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose-

soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose-soever sins ye retain, they are retained:' which of the two honours him most—he that obeys his commands, or he that resists them? The Church doth in both respects preserve her obedience, as well in binding sin as in loosing it. But the Novatian heretics, unmerciful in one regard, and disobedient in the other, desire to bind what they may not loose, and will not loose what they have bound. And herein their opinion is condemned by itself: for it was the intention of the Lord that the power of loosing and that of binding should be equal; because he equally permitted both. He, therefore, that has not the power of loosing, has not the power of binding neither: for as, according to the Lord's intention, he that has the power of binding, has the power of loosing also; so their assertion destroys itself, insomuch that, because they deny themselves the power of loosing, they ought also to deny themselves the power of binding. How, therefore, can the one be lawful, and the other not lawful? For both are lawful to them to whom the power is given; and to them to whom it is not given both are unlawful: wherefore it is certain that both are lawful to the Church, and that both are unlawful to heretics. For this power is permitted only to priests, and therefore is rightly claimed by the Church, which hath true priests; and heretics, who have no true priests, can lay no claim to it." And after a few words: "Consider also this, that he who receives the Holy Ghost, receives power both of loosing and binding sin: for thus it is written, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost,' &c. Therefore he that cannot loose sin, has not the Holy Ghost. The office of the priest is the gift of the Holy Ghost; and the property of the Holy Ghost is to loose and bind sins."

Nothing could be expected more clear and evident for our purpose than this: and you will find almost the same in the sixth chapter of this book. Both St. Ambrose and St. Pacianus do most plainly attest, that the primitive Church always looked upon this power of binding and excommunicating as committed to her from God. But to sum up the whole argument in a few words.

It is manifest, from the nature of society, that the right of excommunication belongs to the Christian Church; and, since the Church of Christ was founded by God himself, it is also manifest that this right of excommunication belongs to the Church by divine right. The power of binding and of loosing is committed, by our Saviour Jesus Christ, to St. Peter, in most express words, and in him to the whole Church. That this power of binding and loosing consisted in *reconciling penitents*,

was always the opinion of the Catholic Church, even in the purest ages. The Christian Church has always exercised this power, from the very times of the apostles, and has exercised it as a power committed to her by Jesus Christ himself. This is abundantly evident, both from the clearest testimonies of the holy Fathers, and from those penitential canons which have in every age been established in all Churches. All persons whatsoever that have attempted either to take away or to diminish this sacred authority, have been ever accounted heretics by the Church, and she has always banished them from her communion. And now, after all this, let such as are impartial judges determine what is to be thought concerning the power of excommunication in the Christian Church. Does it imply any contradiction? Is a spiritual government, distinct from the civil, to be accounted monstrous or ridiculous? Ought it to be looked upon as severe and cruel, to shut out even the most wicked persons from the holy eucharist? For my part, I am thoroughly persuaded that this most wholesome discipline was not invented by the bishops, but instituted by Jesus Christ himself, for the comfort and salvation of our souls. And, indeed, I clearly perceive that the Christian religion can never shine with her own native brightness till, by the pious severity of her clergy, this sacred discipline be revived. I cannot conclude better than in the words of St. Gregory Nyssene: "Do not think (says he) that excommunication is owing to the arrogance of bishops: it is a law of our Fathers, an ancient canon of the Church, which had its rise from the law, and its confirmation from the gospel."

But here I cannot forbear adding something concerning the proper effect of sacerdotal absolution—a thing which has a very great relation to the question before us. For there are a great many very good men to be found, and those not unlearned, who reject all absolution from the priest, at least as a thing indifferent, because they are not able to conceive in their mind what is the effect of such kind of absolution. They argue with themselves after this manner—the truly penitent and contrite sinner is, in the court of conscience, immediately absolved of God, and justified. What, therefore, does the priest add to this divine absolution? Does God, the searcher of hearts, wait for the sentence of the priest? We cannot think that. In order to answer this objection, I shall clearly and distinctly set down what was the opinion of the ancients concerning the effect of absolution.

It is most certain that the primitive Church never accounted a sinner to be justified, however humble and contrite, till he had obtained sacerdotal absolution. Nor, indeed, does this seem

to me in the least wonderful. All men allow the same thing in the sacrament of baptism. No person is worthy to come to baptism, unless he be of a pure and clean heart—one that from his soul abominates all kind of sin, and is most steadfastly resolved to conform his life to the law of the Gospel. And yet even all this does not justify him in the sight of God. Baptism is still wanting, without which remission of sins cannot be obtained in the ordinary way. If such a person should die before he had put off the old man by washing in this sacred water, he would, by the principles of the Gospel, have no right to the kingdom of heaven. It is another question what the God of mercies would determine in his regard, through the meritorious blood of Jesus Christ, which was plentifully shed for the whole race of mankind. And why may we not judge the same concerning repentance? Hence it is that the ancient Fathers were wont to call repentance a second baptism. But I shall give you the opinion of the most holy Fathers upon this subject in the words of Morinus, a very learned man, to whom I most willingly acknowledge myself indebted in many things.

“God, therefore (says he), is the author of reconciliation, and the priest is the minister of it. What does the priest effect? That which God, by the assistance of his Holy Spirit, had begun in the penitent before reconciliation, the priest does by absolution *ministerially* finish, according to that ministerial power committed to him in those words, ‘Whatsoever ye shall bind,’ &c.; and *such as are worthy* of divine absolution, he does actually and visibly absolve.” Thus Morinus. And that this was the opinion of the primitive Church, is most abundantly manifest from Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Pacianus, and St. Ambrose.

NOTES.

COULD any one doubt that the Church visible in England *before* the Reformation was derived by true outward succession from the apostles themselves? Would it have been necessary to enquire, whether the pastoral staff, having been conveyed by unseen hands across the dim horizon of legend and surmise, which bounds the history of the British Church, had descended through an unrecorded catalogue of native bishops, or were received through St. Augustine and St. Gregory from the apostolic founders of the Roman see? Or shall the episcopal character of the latter depend upon the accuracy by which this sacred genealogy is traced? We trifle with the cause, and betray it into the

hands of cavillers, when we but *seem* to rest it upon such evidence. Our forefathers saw the *visible* charter of their privileges as Churchmen spread before their eyes ; and the fact that it was undisputed proves it to be indisputable.

We are somewhat differently circumstanced. Our charter *is* disputed, and it therefore becomes us to examine it with more attention—not to silence our adversaries, but, if possible, to convince them, and, at all events, to satisfy ourselves. Let it be freely conceded that an enormous evil was removed by a violent remedy. *Immedicabile vulnus ense recidendum est* ; but the process of excision is both painful and dangerous, and generally leaves a scar. Yet if such has been the case with us, it betrays a defect of spirituality. Be this completely reasserted, and we may say, in the exquisite language of the poet—

“ The griding sword, with discontinuous wound,
Passed through us—but the ethereal substance closed,
Not long divisible.”

Let it be granted further, that in the course of this perilous struggle some irregularities occurred, which are made neither better nor worse by the fact that they are not without a parallel in other Churches and at other times. If they have left a flaw in our title, we are but poorly consoled by seeing others similarly disqualified. But let us recur to first principles. We have seen that the continuity, which is essential to the visual Church, depends upon the regular succession of its bishops. It does not *consist* in this succession, but it depends upon it in the order of Providence, more or less immediately as an appointed mean ; and whether we refer to Scripture, to reason, or experience, we may confidently add an indispensable mean. Suppose this succession repeatedly set aside by the temporal power—suppose it suspended for any considerable time, or disturbed to any considerable extent—we plainly perceive that, under such circumstances, the identity of the Church must eventually be destroyed, and all the purposes served by its continuous visibility utterly frustrated. It is no longer an independent witness. In such an event the only course open would be to fall back on its earlier self, to unite itself with the great visible body in other lands, and take up again, as far as may be, its old links with the past, through the medium of those fixed symbols by which alone that connexion can be effectually recovered, or permanently preserved.

But was the case so with this country at the Reformation ? Was there any considerable approach to such a catastrophe ? On the contrary, was not the identity of the Church, by the mercy of God, so truly, so plainly, so ostensibly preserved, as to preclude any reasonable *suspicion* of a break—the separation of the Romanists themselves being merely an after-thought ? Do we not see the same sacred orders, the same body of clergy, and essentially the same liturgy ? Did not the same baptism continue to recruit the great congregation—the same communion, purified of its excrescences, to unite them with their forefathers, and with their successors, with each other, and with their unseen Head, that they might feel and know themselves to be “ one bread and one body ?” Was the *sense* of continuity ever for a moment interrupted ? I will not affirm that no holy associations were rudely

sundered, or measure the extent of the evil against the stern necessity which produced it. It is sufficient to show that there was no approximation, not even in appearance, to an universal and vital disseverment. If there were a pretext for cavil, there was no room—no, not the slightest—for real apprehension.

What, then, is the inference? That the succession of the Church was *evidently* unbroken; so evidently, that the wayfaring man might see, and know, and be assured of it. In particular, that the bishops, by whom it was now ordered, were, by the permission of God, true bishops, fully authorized to perform their important functions, and to perpetuate, by the divine blessing, that sacred polity to which their continual presence and agency was thus providentially secured—an inference which every succeeding generation re-asserts and strengthens. We shall then be prepared, with calm and serious minds, to investigate the real nature and actual extent of these deviations—a theological enquiry of the highest interest and importance, but not, I venture to affirm, *vitally* affecting our privileges as Catholic Churchmen—Catholics in the full sense of the word, though reformed from gross corruptions, liberated from foul tyranny, and evermore *protesting* against both.—*Rev. Derwent Coleridge.*

2. A secondary benefit, which may be hoped from the better understanding of sacramental doctrines, may be here mentioned, as immediately connected with the above—its tendency to preserve the unity of the National Church, more particularly at the present crisis. Let but the people be convinced that they *have* the communion of the body and blood of Christ, in the manner expressly stated by the apostle; that they have it in the Church of their fathers, unto which they were born, and through the medium of her scriptural and traditional ministrations; let the doctrine be propounded to all men freely and fully, as they are able to bear it, not as a startling novelty, nor merely as the revival of an outworn and forgotten tenet, but as the expansion of their own forms of thought and modes of speech, in so far as these are borrowed from Holy Writ, or quickened by a conscientious principle, making use of all the holy truths, however scattered or disconnected, which are interwoven in the popular creed, as so many monitors to point the way to another truth in which they are all included, and of which the Church sacraments are the proper exponents, instituted by Christ himself; let them but see the comfort, strength, and holiness, the oblivion of past guilt, the subjugation of present sin, and the necessary renovation of life pre-supposed in a real union with the Son of God; in a word, let the eucharistic mystery be preached, not as a drug, to lull the conscience to a torpid sleep, but as a stimulus the most powerful that can be applied to reasonable, that is, to intellectual *and* spiritual creatures: let but this course be pursued, humbly and consistently, in a spirit of prayer and self-distrust, yet with boundless devotion to our sacred cause, and undoubting reliance on Him by whom it will be upheld; and the Church *in* England has nothing, the Church *of* England but little, to apprehend.—*Rev. Derwent Coleridge.*

PREFACE.

HITHERTO we have spoken, first, of things on which all persons, professing religion, are agreed ; and, secondly, upon things on which all, who understand the framework and polity of our Church, are agreed. We have laboured to show that there is such a thing as a Church, and that obedience is due to it ; that this Church must, in virtue of its many claims and rights, be visible ; that we first receive the Scripture at the hands of the Church, and then are required to test the correctness of the Church's claims by the statements of Scripture. We have shown that there is no " reasoning in a circle " here. We have next looked at the government of the Church in the apostolic age, then in the post apostolic age, and have shown that it was carried on under precisely the same principles. We have next shown what authority the officers of the Church claim ; and, next, what are the marks by which the true Church may be known. To attempt to prove that the Church of England possesses those marks, would be a work of supererogation ; and we pass on, therefore, to the chief practical questions which arise out of the previously discussed subjects. While we are not permitted, by the spirit of devout humility, to make our choice of the divine doctrines, and to set up, as many do, the importance of the one over that of the other ; yet we see that there is one doctrine upon which, *so far as we are concerned*, all the rest depend, which is, as it were, the keystone of the arch ; and if this were removed, all the rest would, *as a system revealed to us*, fall into utter confusion. We speak here of the systems made by human wisdom out of divine materials—the creeds, formularies, and articles of Christian Churches ; and the one doctrine to which we refer, is that of the atonement. Now if this is the case with *doctrine*, of which we have reason to believe that a very small part is revealed—only so much as is necessary to make us wise unto salvation, much more may we expect it to obtain with regard to discipline, which is revealed to us *as a whole*, and of which in the Apostolic Church we have a model at once complete,

inspired, and in action. Accordingly, an attentive examination will show us that the keystone of the great arch of ecclesiastical polity is the doctrine that there has been since the apostolic times, without interruption, a succession of men apostolically ordained, and to whom was committed the sole ministry of the word—the sole authority of the Church—the sole administration of the sacraments.

Viewed from this centre, every part of the machine appears correctly proportioned, and excellently adapted to its respective end ; on the other hand, without this, every ordinance is confused, every sacrament uncertain. We shall proceed, in the first place, to notice here, how far a layman may and ought to proceed as an adviser, an encourager, a teacher, in spiritual things, and where the limit of his commission appears—and any further advance is an encroachment on the priestly office.

First, then, it will hardly be denied, that it is the bounden duty of every Christian man, laic or cleric, when he sees another engaged, or about to be engaged, in an act of sin, to warn him, to show him the heinousness of his intention or conduct, and to exhort him to return, by penitence and prayer, to the right path. Were the orders of our Church ever carried out in these days of degeneracy, it would be the duty—(ought we not to say that, even under existing circumstances, it *is* the duty ?)—of that person to speak also to the parochial minister, in order that, by the public reproof and shame of the offending party, disgrace might be spared to the Church. It is the duty of every Christian man, laic and cleric, to visit, if it be in his power, “the fatherless and the widows in their affliction”—to pray for and with them—to exhort them to a diligent use of the divine ordinances of the Church—and to intimate their cases, their distresses, their spiritual difficulties and temptations, to their lawful and appointed pastor. It is the duty of every Christian man, laic and cleric, to instruct, so far as it is in his power, the ignorant ; and, if this be not possible, to cause them, as far as lies in him, to be instructed. Nay, he may and ought, according as opportunities are afforded him, to teach as well as exhort the adult, as well as the youthful, provided *always*, and provided *only*, that he does so with the humility as well as with the tenderness of a

brother. If such person be a layman, and one, therefore, whose province in the Church is *not* especially to teach, this rule must be most sedulously attended to, and the aid and advice sought of those who are set in authority over the Church of Christ. Our own Church does not even refuse the layman a part in the public services of the Church, for he is permitted, under certain restrictions, to read the Scriptures openly to the congregation; much more, then, has he a right, if it be permitted by the lawful minister, to read them privately to the sick and afflicted. We may go yet further: such person, though a layman, may pray with, exhort, and comfort the sick even, if he do this in words of his own devising, and not precomposed. We must go one step more: a father may address his own family, to whom he is, in some respects, a priest; he cannot be condemned for doing so, if his neighbour's family be present; if there be visitors or strangers, his duty and his privilege is the same. Thus, then, to a certain extent, he may *preach*, though it be not in public. He may be a man learned in the Fathers, well versed in ecclesiastical antiquity, skilled in the interpretation of the Scriptures as given us by the doctors of the Church, and it may become his duty both to write and speak openly on behalf of *evangelical truth* and apostolical order; he may even be bound by his conscience to remonstrate with the lawfully appointed ministers of God's word, and to point out, affectionately and respectfully, their inconsistencies and negligences. Thus, then, we find that a layman may and ought to do all that a priest is appointed to do, save to perform the public services of the Church, to administer the holy sacraments, and to execute those acts which require the *corporate authority* of that Church in whose name he speaks.

Here, then, the commission of the Christian *man* ceases, and that of the Christian priest begins; and here, too, begin the difficult questions of lay baptism, lay communion, &c.

Lay baptism is a practice which has been so much discussed of late, and involves so many principles of Church polity, that we cannot pass it over without investigation. The chief difficulty which presents itself is twofold: first, as to the administration; and, secondly, as to the sacrament. It cannot be doubted,

that if there be any peculiar calling and appointment necessary to those who minister at the altar, then the usurping the priestly office without that peculiar calling and appointment must be a grievous and deadly sin. Let it be granted that episcopal ordination comprises that peculiar apostolical calling and appointment (and this point we have already examined), and it follows that none but episcopally ordained men can at any time lawfully administer any sacrament; but inasmuch as many hundreds of persons—perhaps, many thousands—are annually baptized by individuals not so ordained, the more important question arises, how far is the ceremony real baptism?—that is to say, under what circumstances is it valid, and under what circumstances not? Let it be supposed that A. B., taking upon him the office and assuming the character, falsely, of a lawfully ordained minister, do baptize a child, the parents or other individuals present not being aware of the fraud: it is proposed to ascertain whether, in the event of their continuing, and the person baptized also continuing, in the same ignorance till his death, that person is to be esteemed baptized or not. We do not say, whether his salvation is affected by it or not, because our Church has already answered *that* question, by declaring the sacraments only *generally* necessary to salvation; and the mock ceremony in this case effectually bars the undoubted sacrament. Here the Churches of Rome and of England are at issue: the Church of Rome, by allowing the validity of lay baptism, would pronounce this baptism valid; but then she declares the sacrament not merely *generally*, but *universally* necessary to salvation.* The Church of England, on the other hand, denies† the validity of lay baptism, and therefore speaks of the sacraments as only *generally* necessary to salva-

* It is not meant here to deny that many means of salvation, such as the merits and intercession of saints, the prayers and alms of friends, and, above all, the purifying flames of purgatory, may, according to the Roman Church, rescue the unbaptized person from the damnation which is entailed upon him by dying without that sacrament; but simply that no means short of these, or such as these, will be efficacious.

† We say this advisedly, because, though many learned persons have maintained the contrary, we think that the vast majority of Anglican divines have decided as we do, and none with more ability than the authors of the present tracts.

tion—that is, necessary where they may be had. This distinction will, we think, show, that both Churches felt the difficulty, and adopted means to avoid it. A few remarks will, we think, show, that the Anglican decision is a better one than the Roman one. The one says—You must, at all events, be baptized, or you will inevitably be lost; but then anybody may, if the case be one of emergency, baptize you—a lay person, or a woman. The Church of England says—If, *without fault on your part in the matter*, you die without baptism, no lawful minister being to be obtained, your salvation is not prejudiced; since no one but a lawful minister may baptize you. Here, then, let it be recollected, that parents who neglect the baptism of their children, or adults who neglect their own, cannot plead the excuse provided by the Anglican Church; for the only cases which come under her excuse are children who die almost immediately after birth, or persons who have lived continually in a place where there were no priests—as, *e. g.*, the children of persons wrecked on an island otherwise uninhabited, and who have been obliged to remain there. It cannot be pretended that any individual who dies suddenly in this land, and who has had every day opportunities for baptism, can be included in the Anglican excuse; nor can they plead it who have received lay or schismatic baptism. But it will be said, if the parties really desired to receive that sacrament because of its divine authority, and were in their own minds convinced that the persons to whom they applied had the right to confer it, would not that intention and that conviction justify them, and make valid the baptism? We reply, no: it presumes that a man's own conscience is a sufficient rule of conduct—a most false and dangerous rule, because it would justify the persecuting career of Paul before his apostolate, and, perhaps, in some instances, even the crucifixion of our Lord himself; for, doubtless, some of those who crucified him had their consciences seared as with a hot iron, and conscientiously believed him to be an impostor. Besides, the parties should have done somewhat more, if their desire to obey the law of God was sincere, and, in this case, was to be the cause of the validity of their baptism; that same desire should have led them to investigate the pre-

vious question—viz., the grounds on which the right to baptize rests. This is *very rarely* done ; and, after all, if any man comes to a wrong decision in a matter of this moment, because he will not obey the teaching of the Church, the consequences must rest upon his own head. Moreover, if the Church refuses to consider baptism valid when performed by lay members of her own communion, much more would she do so when performed by schismatics. The admission of lay baptism by the Church of Rome is also a marvellous inconsistency with the other part of her system : she permits a layman to administer the sacraments, thereby showing that they may be valid without any priestly apostolical succession, and at the same time she declares that all who have been, whether by *her* act or their own, separated from her pale are schismatics, and therefore have no valid sacraments. It is in vain to say that the schismatic, being such from his birth, *cannot* have received valid baptism—*cannot* consequently be a Christian—and therefore *cannot* confer what he has not received ; for he doubtless received the ordinance, through many links, from a source which was *once* not schismatic ; and if, therefore, Christianity be conferred in baptism, the first link of the chain, being Christian, christianizes all the rest.* The inconsistency remains, and the clerical and laical characters are involved in inextricable confusion.

* This argument depends upon the definition of schism by the Roman Church, not that by the Anglican Church.

C.

CAMBRIDGE,

The Feast of St. Michael.

THE OFFICE OF A MINISTER.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. WM. LUCY, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S.

God's method for Man's salvation.

WHEN our Saviour was dead, and had suffered for the sins of mankind, he then brake down the partition wall that was betwixt the Jew and Gentile—he then, as he suffered for the sins of the whole world, so he took care how all the world should be partakers of these sufferings of his: he could by divine power have stamped their souls with infused graces, and by compulsion have forced men to that faith which should be saving; but then heaven and hell had not been *præmium et pœna*; he took, therefore, such a course as might most ordinately bring men to his service without compulsion; and, since he was to leave the world himself, he took order with his servants to act as if he were present, and negotiate the great work of salvation of souls by a delegate power from him. Therefore, in Mark xvi. 14, you may observe, “that he appeared to the eleven;” that is, to the eleven apostles, for one of them, Judas, had apostatized, and had hanged himself; and in the fifteenth verse he gave them commission, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;” that is, to every creature that is capable of it, &c.;—there was their commission. The same story is thought by many to be a little more fully described by St. John: after he had appeared to them as before, he said, “Peace be unto you; as my Father sent me, so send I you;” and then he breathed on them the Holy Ghost. Mark this phrase, “As my Father sent me:” it is a particular phrase, not used elsewhere, and therefore intimates some extraordinary matter. God had sent many men before, but never any besides Christ with the fulness of authority, as it is described Matt. xxviii. 18, “All power is given me in heaven and earth.” All power was never given to any before: I send you, therefore, with all power, as my Father sent me; so the power, then, of giving powers to others, which was never given before but to myself. And, therefore, in that place of St. Matthew before cited, in the last verse too, “I am

with you to the end of the world"—with you teaching, baptizing, giving orders to others—for that is mightily enforced out of the word *sicut*—"as my Father sent me;" and, indeed, else he could not be with them in their persons to the end of the world, but in their succession, by which means he might well be said to be with them to the world's end. Having now touched upon these places, I will collect this: here was in Matt. xxviii. 19, baptism instituted, matter and form—"In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," which we read not prescribed before: we see the officers appointed—these eleven, in their personal bodies or succession; we see their dioceses enlarged—"preach to all nations," and as preaching, so baptizing as large, they go together; we see the subjects of their sermons enlarged before Christ's death. When they had to do with the Jews only, it was, "The kingdom of God was at hand:" now it is, "To observe all things that I have commanded you." So that then we see, first, before our Saviour's death, two sorts of officers—apostles, disciples—their office at the first limited to preaching, and that to the Israelites: that they did baptize we are assured, but not in what form, nor by what commission, until after our Saviour's death. Then we have seen the holy communion instituted just before his death, in matter and form, and commissioners appointed to celebrate it—to wit, the apostles. We see after his death a full and absolute commission granted to these persons, to whom the communion was committed, to do all things, baptize, preach, celebrate, forgive sins, to choose and send forth others; and, for aught I can collect in this story, the whole ministerial power invested in them. But because something may be objected against this which hath been delivered, which I take to be the foundation of what shall follow, I will clear those objections which seem most troublesome to me, and so proceed to show how the apostles managed this stewardship committed to them.

Whether the power of preaching was given only to the Apostles.

FIRST, it may be questioned whether the power of preaching was given to the apostles, and them only. To understand this, we must look back, and remember that the seventy likewise were sent, but that was to the Israelites only; their commission extended no farther before our Saviour's death: and after his death we find no commission given but to the apostles—and what authority they or any else could have to preach the Gospel, it must be from them. Let no man trouble this or any other part

of my discourse with that frivolous objection which is often intruded into these controversies. We read not that these, or these men, that these presbyters received new commissions from the apostles, and yet find them preaching: for answer, once for many other times in which it may be needful, it was impossible that the Acts or Epistles could keep a register of all that were ordained by the apostles or bishops in their age; it is enough for us to know that all power for these things was given to the apostles; and we may reasonably think that, of these seventy which were chosen by our Saviour, such as proved worthy should be commissioned by the apostles, and such as were unworthy (as some were) should be suspended *ab officio*: but for these particular registers, and how and when each man was, is not apparent, nor to be expected. Well, then, now it seems the apostles had all the power of preaching, none others being sent in this embassy to the world but themselves. But could none else preach?—not gifted men? Consider these men—never any so extraordinarily gifted as these were; yet see, as I observed, they preached not without an outward calling by Christ, nor then until he sent them. Again, it is observable, that by his outward word he directed their doctrine to the Jews, that they should preach “the kingdom of God was at hand;” and to the Gentiles, “teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you:” so then Christ had given them command before what they should preach. I do not find, no, not in these, yet any inspired sermon, but upon direction; and although these men had, no doubt, the most immediate call that ever any had, and the most extraordinary gifts, in the most extraordinary way, yet, for to enable them for their preaching, they had conversation with Christ, which doth the most resemble the most industrious life of studious scholars, which in books converse with God, as possibly a thing can do; so that in that time, in the time of our Saviour’s life, and until his ascension, we can find no place for inward calling without an outward, nor an outward execution without means to enable them for this great ministry of preaching, but throughout a most methodical course.

Whether these, and these only, were commissioned for Baptism.

THE next thing to be looked upon is, whether these, and these only, had the power of baptizing. No doubt we may say of this, that they had the duty only, none other obliged to either but they; and when I have named the duty, I think I may justly add the *εξουσία*. The right and authority will go along,

for it seems to be a branch, and a main one, of that great commission in Matt. xxviii., and without doubt a great piece of the power of the keys. Now then, they, and they only, that we read of, had from Christ this commission; those questions come not to be handled whether bishops, priests, or deacons, have this power—there was yet no such distinction of them, as I find; but whether the apostles only, or no, I do not find any other: the seventy had a commission to baptize among the Hebrews as well as they; their commission of preaching and baptizing equal, but what that was I know not: but here all the power is granted to the apostles, in whom, and whom alone, I can discern all the ministerial power belonging to men's souls; so that they, or men sent by them, have this power, or none. I know there is a great dispute whether laymen can baptize; and the Church of Rome is mightily offended with Calvin for saying they cannot: but I do not find the least argument out of Scripture to confute him; and certainly this place of Matt. xxviii. seems exceeding strong for his cause, and they themselves grant that the ordinary minister of baptism is *sacerdos*, by which word they understand bishop and priest, that in their absence a deacon may, and so go on to the little orders, but in extremity a layman: for my part, I grant, for certain, that the apostles were the only men ordained for it. I conclude that baptism is necessary, and that it is a great mercy of God to the children of believing parents, that they are capable of it. That baptism is necessary, is evident out of the dialogue between our Saviour and Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot," &c. A reason is given, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh;" as if he should say nothing can work *ultra sphaeram*. Flesh, therefore, cannot inherit more than flesh, nor be in a better than fleshly estate, and that is not the state of heaven; therefore there must be some way by which that which is flesh and blood may become spiritual, which alone is by baptism. That which Calvin most ingeniously urgeth, that children which die uncircumcised are not to be judged damned, may thus be answered: that their bond of circumcision was dated the eighth day, and therefore not due before the date; but ours of baptism, being without date, is due presently. So that, then, ours is like the state of those who were not circumcised the eighth day, when circumcision was due—not of those before the eighth day, when it was not due. Now upon this reason the care of the Church laid a mighty charge upon all preachers, to be diligent to preach all dangers which might surprise children before they come to do their duty. Now,

although I place such a necessity as that we see no ordinate means without it of assurance of heaven, yet I will not despair of God's mercy to such who add not evil of their own acting, which should hinder the effect of Christ's death, and the daily prayers of the Church for all men. And therefore, with Calvin, I think it a rash adventure of any man to open the gate of heaven, who hath not the key committed to him, which was not given to him; yet I question, if he hath turned the key in the lock, whether it do not open the door, although he hath not the legal power, which Calvin cannot deny but that it hath been an universal opinion of the Church; and, for all I see, in his eighteenth section of his fourth book of his "Institutes," he doth not deny but it is valid; and I believe he would not allow to re-baptize such a child which he knew had true baptism, according to matter and form: but I am confident no man ever had this power given him from God but the apostles; and therefore it must needs be a mighty presumption in that man, who, without authority given him, should dare to put God's seal to any article or covenant by which he might be obliged to any duty.

Whether administering the Communion was appropriated to the Apostles in our Saviour's life.

THE next thing to be examined would be, whether in his lifetime our Saviour did appropriate the administration of the communion to the apostles only: and because we see that commission only given to them, nor ever semblance of anything to the contrary; because it is a work of so great height in itself; because, as the other, so this sacrament conveys with it a covenant on God's part; and because from Christ's time downward the right of consecrating was never pretended to by any man until now, I cannot but think it a monstrous pride in such men, who, having no authority from the apostles, should dare to undertake it: and although I have heard of such an opinion, yet I never heard or read any reason for it.

Whether the power of the keys was given to them only.

AND then, next, I will examine, whether the power of the keys was given to them, and them only: by which power I understand the power of binding and loosing, the power of government and ruling in the Church, and Church affairs. Here are two pretenders: the one, that it was given to St. Peter only; the other,

that it was given to the whole Church. I will examine both. First, for St. Peter. This controversy between the Church of Rome and us hath been so vastly handled in such large volumes, as it would be a little impudence to offer at it in these few sheets, and to stop my intended course with tedious disputes, which have so often been repeated and canvassed by others; only I will point my finger at that which I think may occasion a reader, in studying this controversy, to fix upon himself what is pertinent, and to take notice of such things as may easily induce him to the truth; for though I am persuaded I could add something, at least illustrations, to some arguments which are discussed in this controversy, yet that would drive me from satisfying your doubt, and make my few lines swell to a volume. I only say thus much, that in all those places, Matt. xviii. 19; John xxi. 15, 16, 17, which are the main pillars upon which St. Peter's prerogative is settled, no man living can show me other power which a man can conceive reasonably to be conferred on him, than on the whole body of the apostles. In those two places, Matt. xxviii. 19, &c., and John xx. 21, if we should understand him a rock in Matt. xvi., which yet, without partiality, a man cannot do, but rather think that St. Peter's confession was that rock upon which the Church was built, or that our Saviour, who by his confession was acknowledged the Son of God, was that rock, hath with some a great consent of antiquity; yet should we grant him there to be termed a rock, yet it must be no otherwise than *derivative*, secondarily; Christ is the chief corner-stone, the spiritual rock: and then there was no more said to him than St. Paul expounds of them all, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," to them all: the apostles were secondary foundations and rocks as well as he, were that place to be understood to call him a rock. Nor can there be any stronger foundation affirmed of him, either in person or succession, than of the rest. "I will be with you to the end of the world;" that is, assisting them in executing their duty. For the second place, "I will give thee the keys of heaven;" it is but a promise, and he performed it to him and the rest. For the third, "Feed my sheep;" it is a poor argument drawn from a mere simile of pastorizing; but, let it be what it can, there can be no more in it but preach, baptize, give the communion, give orders, govern the Church—all which are involved in those two places insisted upon before, and therefore I desist from further discourse of them; and, supposing that the apostles had equal authority to minister divine mysteries to the whole world with St. Peter, we will now come and enquire whe-

ther any other men had any such commission given them by Christ or not.

How it is to be understood that the power of the keys is given to the Church.

THE chief place, if not the only, which I have observed in the Gospel, pretended to be wrested to any such intent, is Matt. xviii. 17: "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church." Thence it is by some enforced, that the Church is made the judge in ecclesiastical discipline; and by the Church they will understand others besides the apostles. To apprehend which, conceive with me, first, that this was one of those things which our Saviour delivered for a rule to govern the Church and Christian men by; not at that present, but afterwards, when Church discipline was settled: for as yet there was no such thing as any discipline settled, but, like a commonwealth, in the framing by degrees, laws projected, yea, contrived and enacted, which might take their rise and force afterwards when established. It is a poor conceit, methinks, of Beza on this place, who would have it understood of the Jewish synagogue, since he himself confesseth that the word Church is nowhere else used for the synagogue, nor indeed can it be: and why it should be forced to that meaning here, I see no reason; and therefore the true understanding of it must be taken from those settled laws which our Saviour made after his death, of which I have discoursed. Now that this law could not extend to any other men but these apostles, who had all the powers given them, as I have explained, will appear—first, because it seems to be a juridical way of proceedings; and it is impossible that the multitude should have juridical discretion to make a man as an heathen or a publican, being many of them illiterate men; and we should confine the limits of Christian men and religion in much too narrow bounds to say it belongs only to the learned, or men enabled for such or so high a work. But there must be officers in a Church to hear and judge of such a cause, which officers we understood by the Church; and although this censure ought to be done in public, in the face of the Church or the court, where such matters are discussed, yet it is not necessary, nor can have a face of reason with it, that every one of the Church should be there present, or they who are present should have the nature of judges, only such men as are officers enabled to act in this power; then if officers, these men who had the power given them in John xx., are these which are here in the eighteenth verse said to bind and loose. So that, then, I see nothing that can

hinder us from agreeing, that after our Saviour's death all ecclesiastical power was seated in the apostles : how they understand it, we shall consider in the future discourse, by their actions set down to us, which must be our next undertaking.

The Apostles' authority, and management of it.

Now we see the eleven enthroned in the chair of ecclesiastical power ; they, and they only, having interest in it ; but yet they had only power, the right and authority they received *ἐνταυρις*, the virtue and qualities, enabling them to execute this power, according to the extent, throughout the world afterwards, when the power of tongues was given them ; and you may find this word *ἐνταυρις* used for this virtue in Acts i. 8, where it is promised ; so that they had all power and authority before, but this faculty of tongues they had not until then : and this will be of little use in our discourse, being a gift of no constant succession in the Church, but only those authorities of administering the sacraments, of preaching, of giving orders, of governing—these will always be necessary in the Church, and therefore must be insisted upon. For this, therefore, the first thing we find them acting in this kind, was to settle their own society, and complete the number of twelve ; and this you may find recorded in Acts i. 13, where we may observe, first, that they referred the election of this apostle to God, by casting lots ; they chose two, Barsabas and Matthias, and referred it to divine election ; the reasons of which, guessed at by divines, rather than demonstrated, I omit. But now there are twelve apostles, bishops—for if Judas was a bishop by being an apostle, as he is termed verse 20, the rest likewise were—or twelve deacons or ministers, for that phrase is affirmed of Judas in regard of his apostleship, verse 25.

What additions were made to the Apostles.

BUT yet we must not leave them, but examine whether there were any addition made to these apostles, and what that was. To understand this, we may find St. Paul in abundance of places called an apostle. Instead of many, take this one instance : “ Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ : ” an apostle, not of men, not by man—that is, who received my apostleship not from the authority given to men as before, when Christ sent his apostles, as his Father sent him

with power to give these powers, "As my Father sent me, so send I you;" not, then, of men—that is, from this authority given to them; nor by man—that is, by any ministerial act of man. He received his baptism by the ministry of man, as you may find Acts ix. 18; but his apostleship he received of God, and by God, as the other apostles did, by the immediate ordination of Christ: and in this I should place the difference betwixt these apostles and others, that they are made such by an immediate ordination of Christ; for it is not enough that, some say, to be an apostle, was to be such a minister as conversed with Christ in his humanity, or saw him in the flesh, for this did all the seventy which yet were not called apostles; nor is it sufficient which others say, they were such whose office extended to the whole world; for so we shall find in the Acts almost none confined to any place, but that others as well as St. Paul had a care of all Churches. But upon this a man may justly enquire, why St. Paul should, in such distinct terms, "not of men, nor by men," describe himself, since it seems every apostle was such. To clear this, and give further illustration to this truth, observe, that others besides these were called apostles; so you may find first Barnabas, as well as St. Paul: "Which when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard," &c.—apostles in the plural number. Some have thought that this Barnabas was the same with Barsabas, who, in Acts i. 23, was competitor with Matthias for the apostleship; but, methinks, missing the place then, it were strange he should be called an apostle afterwards: and, indeed, their names differ, their original names and their additional names; for Acts i. his name was Joseph, called Barsabas, surnamed Justus, but in Acts iv. 36, instead of Joseph, is Joses, and instead of Barsabas, is Barnabas; but besides him we read of Andronicus and Junia, of whom St. Paul saith that they were his "kinsmen, his fellow-prisoners, and of note among the apostles:" which words, although they have received a double sense, either that they were eminent persons among the apostles, or else esteemed and noted by them to be such persons of esteem; yet there are many both ancient and modern writers, both such as are for and against bishops, that agree they were apostles, as the words very naturally bear it; and, to take away the scruple, both the Centuries and Baronius agree upon it, which if there were scruple they would not have done: then turn to Phil. ii. 25, there you shall find St. Paul calling "Ephraoditus my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger." Here I cannot but wonder at our translators, who render it messenger, such a mean phrase intimating any common or trivial man who is sent on an errand.

Beza did much better, who called him *legatum*, an ambassador—a nobler phrase; but, indeed, the word is ἀπόστολον, “your apostle;” and so those epithets before express him “my brother,” &c. This may likewise be showed out of 1 Cor. iv. 9, “God hath set forth us the apostles last:” the translation here, likewise, is not good; for it is not, he hath set forth us last, but us last apostles, us that were the last apostles. Who are they? In particular he names Apollo: “These things I have in a figure transcribed to myself and to Apollo, that ye might learn of us not to think of men above that which is written.” Now, then, although he may mean others beside himself and Apollo, yet it is fit to conceive that he should be in the number of those who are called apostles, because he is one of those from whom they must learn “not to think of men above what is written.” And, among other arguments, this is a main one—that we, the last apostles, Apollo and myself, and perhaps more, are unhappy, wretched people, marked out for misers, to be made a spectacle of contemptible people, “to the world, to angels, and men.” I could here, likewise, treat of Gal. i. 19, where James, the brother of the Lord, is called an apostle, who by many is thought, and from good reason, to be none of the two Jameses which were of the twelve, but a third, who was made Bishop of Jerusalem; but I desist. It is evident out of Scripture that the Holy Writ mentioneth more apostles besides the twelve and St. Paul; and if, besides the Scripture, any man’s language may be heard, consider that of Ignatius, who was contemporary, as he speaks, with the apostles Paul, John, and Timothy, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, who there speaks in the language of the times, and by that language calls Timothy an apostle.

A reason of this.

Now, then, to draw this discourse to some period, there were other apostles besides the first twelve, and St. Paul the thirteenth; but why so? Because, as Theodoret speaks upon Phil. ii. 25, in the case of Epaphroditus, before handled, that he was called “their apostle, to whom the care of them was committed.” And again, upon 1 Tim. iii. 1, “Heretofore they called presbyters bishops, and those which we call bishops, they called apostles; but (saith he) in process of time they left the name of apostles to them who were truly apostles, and they gave the name of bishops to those which were formerly called apostles.” So likewise St. Jerome, on Gal. i. 9, “In progress of time other apostles were ordained by those which the Lord had

chosen :” * and this is the reason why St. Paul, where before, Gal. i. 1, saith, “ He was an apostle, not of men, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ,” to distinguish him from those others who were apostles by constitution of apostles, not immediately by God ; and to the same purpose may that be understood of St. Paul, “ I suppose I was not a whit behind, or less, or inferior to the chiefest apostles.” Amongst the apostles, the twelve, there were not some chief and some inferior ; but the twelve were the chief, and the rest inferior. Now he, having his calling and enabling from Christ immediately, was not inferior to them. And though I read, I know not where, the authority of Theodoret slighted, yet I do not remember what satisfaction is given to his reason, nor can well conceive how these Scriptures can in any other sense be reasonably expounded.

* “ *Procendente tempore et alii ab his quos Dominus elegerat ordinati sunt apostoli.*”

LAY ELDERSHIP

PROVED TO BE

CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE AND ANTIQUITY.

BY THE

RIGHT REVEREND JOSEPH HALL, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF NORWICH.

The appellation of Lay Elders, and the state of the question concerning them.

THE question concerning the lay presbyter is not easily stated; the thing itself is so new that we are not yet agreed of the name. *Presbyter*, we know, in the Greek, as also *Zachen* in the Hebrew (whence the use of it is borrowed), is a word importing age, and signifies a man elder in years. Now, for that years should and do commonly bring knowledge and experience, and carry gravity and authority, therefore it is traduced from that natural sense, and used to signify a man of some eminence in place and government. So we have, in the Old Testament, elders of the house, elders of the congregation, elders of the city, elders of the land, elders of the people, and these sometimes marched with the highest offices; so we have elders and judges, princes and elders, priests and elders: and all these were titles of civil authority. But, when we come to the days of the Gospel, under the New Testament, now we find the elders of the Church—a name which comprehended all those sacred persons who were employed in the promulgation of the Gospel (as Calvin well observes), whether apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or doctors, and, indeed, none but them; and in vain shall we seek for any other presbyters or elders in the Acts, or Epistles of the blessed apostles, or in all following antiquity. What to make, therefore, of those elders or presbyters which are now in question, “which (saith Travers), if you will speak properly, are only them that rule,” he were wise that could tell. Merely civil they would not be, for they take upon them ecclesiastical charges; merely sacred and spiritual they are not, for they are neither bishops, priests, nor deacons; merely laic they

would not be, clergymen they deny to be. Those of old that served at the altar were wont to be described by their linen vestures, other men by woollen: these are neither of both, but a mixture of both—a linsey-woolsey contexture—a composition, which, as God (in type of what I now say) forbade under the law, so he never had use of it, never acknowledged it, under the gospel. How, therefore, in this fag-end of the world, they should come to have any new being in the Church, it is enough for me to wonder. If they affect to be *seniores populi*, we would not grudge them this title; but if *seniores*, or *presbyteri ecclesie*, they have no more right to that than we bishops have to crowns and sceptres. Lest any doubt should seem ungrounded, Beza, who will not yield these elders laics, to grace them the more, ascribes to them some kind of spiritual cure: they feed the flock by governing—they preach after a sort in the reproof of sin in their consistory; and yet he is fain to contradistinguish them from teaching elders; and their style, forsooth, is “governments.” But tell me, I beseech you, dear brethren, you that are so apt to affect and receive a foreign discipline, tell me in good earnest, can you think this to be the feeding of the flock of Christ which St. Paul requires of the elders at Ephesus—can you think these men to be such as the apostle there speaks of, *in quo dominus vos constituit episcopos*, encharging them with a flock over which Christ hath made them bishops? Was ever any lay elder styled by that name? Doth not Calvin himself confess that the presbyters both there mentioned, and Titus i. 5, are no other than doctors and teachers, because in both places they are styled bishops? And was there ever heard of a lay bishop in the world? (those sacrilegious excepted in some parts of Germany, who retain nothing of that divine order but lands and name). Yea, my brethren, why are ye willing to be deceived? Who ever spake or heard of a lay presbyter in all the Church of God till this age? Take the term as it is: we are forced upon this epithet for distinction sake, not out of any scornful intent of discouraging God’s people—we know that, in a general acceptance, they are all the Lord’s inheritance—but because there is a necessary difference to be put betwixt them whom God hath separated to his own immediate service in the ministry, and those Christians which are under them in their ministerial charge, we make use of these terms, wherewith the greatest antiquity hath furnished us. The old canons, named apostolical, make frequent mention of it. The blessed martyr, old Ignatius, as in other places, so especially in his epistle to them of Smyrna, is clear: “Let the laics be subject to

the deacons, the deacons to the presbyters," &c. And before him the holy martyr Clement, Bishop of Rome: "A layman is bound to laic precepts." And yet, before him also, I, for my part, am confident that St. Peter, whom this man succeeded both in his chair and martyrdom, meant no other, when he charged his fellow-bishops that they should feed their flocks, not domineering over their clergy; for the word is plural, not as it were *clero*, but *clericis*: and, in the verse before it, implies the very act of episcopacy: those that would have it taken otherwise are fain to add a word of their own to the text, reading it, *God's heritage*; whereas the original is *heritage*, perfectly in this sense. Neither is there any ataxy to be feared in bringing in this distinction betwixt pastors and flock; it is an eutaxy rather, and such as without which nothing could ensue but confusion. If these men, then, be spiritual and sacred persons, why do they not challenge it? If laic, why are they ashamed of it? If betwixt both, let them give themselves that title which Bernard gives himself upon the occasion of his forced forbearance of his canonical devotions, "*Ego tanquam chimæra quædam mei seculi.*" Here, then, ye seduced brethren, that go all upon trust for the strong belief of a lay presbyter, your credulity hath palpably abused you. It is true, this advantage you have, that the first authors of this late device were men of great note in their times, but men still; and herein they showed it too well, that for their own ends they not only invented such a government as was never heard of in any Christian Church throughout the whole world before them, but also found out some pretence of Scriptures, never before so understood, whereupon to father their so new and (now) plausible erection.

No Lay Elder ever mentioned or heard of in the world till this present age. The Texts of Scripture particularized to the contrary.

AND that you may not think this to be some bold, unwarranted suggestion from an unadvised adversary, let me tender this fair offer to you. It is a hard and long task for a man to prove negatives. Let any of your most learned and confident teachers produce but the name of one lay presbyter that ever was in the Church from the times of Christ and his apostles until this present age, I shall yield the cause, and live and die theirs. We find, in common experience, that we apprehend things according to our own prepossession. Jaundiced eyes seem to see all

objects yellow; blood-shotten, red. It is no marvel if those who have mancipated their minds to the judgments of some whom they over admire, and have lent their eyes out of their own heads, wheresoever they find mention of an elder in the New Testament, think presently of a lay presbytery; like that man in Erasmus, who persuaded himself he saw a strange dragon in the air, because his friend confidently pointed to it, and seemed to wonder at his not seeing it. But those who with impartial and unprejudiced hearts shall address themselves to the book of God, and with a careful sincerity compare the Scriptures, shall find that wheresoever the word elder or presbyter is, in an evangelical sense, used in the holy Epistles, or the history of the Acts, except it be in some few places where eldership of age may be meant, it is only and altogether taken for the ministers of the Gospel. There are, if I reckon right, some two-and-twenty places where the word is mentioned: were it not too long to take them into particular examination, I should gladly scan them all—some we will; let us begin with the last: “The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius;” and, “The elder to the elect lady.” What elder is this? Is it not the holy and dear apostle, St. John? “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, &c. Feed the flock of God which is among you,” saith St. Peter. Lo, such an elder as St. Peter, such were they whom he exhorts: their title is one, their work is one. I suppose no lay elder will take upon him this charge of feeding the flock of Christ, with St. Peter; and if Beza would fain, out of favour to their new erection, strain the word so far as to feeding by government, yet it is so quite against the hair, that Calvin himself, and Chamier, and Moulin (and who not?) do everywhere contradistinguish their pastors to their ruling elders. And for the place in hand Calvin is clear ours. “The flock of Christ (saith he) cannot be fed but with pure doctrine—*quæ sola spirituale est pabulum.*” “Is any man sick among you? (saith St. James). Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick.” Are these lay elders, think we, whom the apostle requires to be called for?—who must comfort the sick, cure him by their prayers, anoint him with their miraculous oil for recovery? Let me ask, then, were there no spiritual pastors, no ministers, among them? And if there were such, was it likely or fit they should stand by, whilst laymen did their spiritual services? Besides, were they lay hands to which this power of miraculous cure by anointing the sick was then committed? Surely, if we consult with St. Mark, we

shall find them sacred persons : such lips and such hands must cure the sick. So then the elders of St. John, St. Peter, and St. James are certainly pastors and ministers. And what other are St. Paul's ? "For this cause (saith he to Titus), I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city." What elders are those ? The next words shall tell you : "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, &c. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God." Lo, St. Paul's elder here is no other than a bishop : even then, as the Fathers observe, every bishop was a presbyter ; and though not every presbyter a bishop, yet every presbyter a sacred and spiritual person, such an one as is capable of holy ordination. Thus might we easily pass through all these texts wherein there is any mention of presbyters. One only place there is that might, to a fore-inclined mind, seem to give some colour—and, God knows, but a colour—of a lay presbytery. "Let the elders that rule well (saith St. Paul to Timothy) be counted worthy of all honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." A place which hath been so thoroughly sifted by all who have meddled with this ill-raised controversy, as that no human wit can devise to add one scruple of a notion towards a farther discussion of it. I dare confidently say there is scarce any one sentence of Scripture which hath undergone a more busy and curious agitation. The issue is this, that never any expositor, for the space of fifteen hundred years after Christ, took these presbyters for any other than priests or ministers. Of eleven or twelve several expositions of the words, each one is more fair and probable than this, which is newly devised, and obtruded upon the Church. The text is so far from favouring these lay presbyters, that we need no other argument against them ; for where was it ever heard of, or how can it be, that mere laics should be *προεσώτες* ? Bishops and pastors have had that style, as in Scripture, so in following antiquity. That passage of Clemens Alexandrinus, cited by Eusebius, concerning St. John, that he at Ephesus committed the charge of his young man to an old bishop, whom he calls *τὸν προεσώτα*, besides that of Justin Martyr, already cited, and others, show it plainly. And if, as some, our appellation of priest come from *προεσῶς*, as it well may, how can a layman be so ? Or if from *prebstre*, as the more think, let us have lay priests, if lay presbyters. And what better commentary can we have of St. Paul's *καλῶς προϊστάου* than himself gives of himself, in his exhortation to the elders or pastors at Ephesus, who interprets it, by careful attending to themselves and their flocks ?—which even their own authors are

wont to appropriate to pastors. And what can that double honour be which the apostle claims for these elders or presbyters, but respect and due maintenance? To whom is this due but to those that serve at the altar? As for lay presbyters, was it ever required that they should be maintained by the Church?

And what can those *κοπιῶντες* be, but those priests which diligently and painfully toil in God's harvest, in the word and doctrine? All the elders, therefore, there intended are exercised in the word and doctrine. But there are some that do *κοπιῶν*, labour more abundantly than the rest: these must be respected and encouraged accordingly. Neither is there any reason in the world to induce an indifferent man to think that this *μάλιστα κοπιῶντες* should imply a several and distinct office, but rather a more intense and serious labour in the same office; as might be shown in a thousand instances. Whereas, therefore, this is the only Scripture that in some foreprised ears seems to sound toward a lay presbytery, I must needs profess, for my part, if there were no other text in all the book of God more pregnant for their disproof, I should think this alone a very sufficient warrant for their disclamation. And I do verily persuade myself that those men who, upon such weak, yea, such no grounds, have taken upon them, being mere laics, to manage these holy affairs of God, have a hard answer to make one day, before the tribunal of Almighty God, for this their presumptuous usurpation.

Now, then, since this one litigious and unproving text is the only place in the whole New Testament that can bear any pretence for the lay presbytery—for as for their *dic eeclesiæ*, and their *κυβερνήσεις*, they are so improbable, and have been so oft and thoroughly charmed, that they are not worth either urging or answer—and, on the contrary, so many manifest and pregnant testimonies of Scripture have been and may be produced, wherein the presbyters or elders of the Church are, by the Spirit of God, only meant for the spiritual guides of his people—I hope every ingenuous Christian will easily resolve how much safer it is for him to follow the clear light of many evident Scriptures, than the doubtful glimmering of one mistaken text.

Lay Eldership a mere stranger to antiquity, which acknowledgeth no presbyters but divines.

AND as the Scriptures of God never meant to give countenance to a lay presbytery, so neither did subsequent antiquity. I speak it upon good assurance. There was never any clause in

any father, council, or history, that did so much as intimate any such office in the Church of God, or the man that wielded it. The fautors of it would gladly snatch at every sentence in old records where they meet with the name of a presbyter, as if there the bells chimed to their thought. But certainly, for fifteen hundred years, no man ever dreamed of such a device; if he did, let us know the man. I am sure our apostolical Clemens makes a contradistinction of laics and presbyters; and Ignatius, the holy martyr, yet more punctually, goes in these degrees—bishop, priest, deacon, and layman. This difference is so familiar with that saint, as that we scarce miss it in any of his epistles; insomuch as Vedelius himself, finding, in the epistle of this martyr to the Ephesians, a certain expression, translates it, “*memorable sacerdotum vestrorum collegium*—a college of presbyters.” Such the bishops of those first times had—as we have still the dean and chapter to consult withal upon any occasion; but those presbyters were no other than professed divines, neither were ever otherwise construed. If we look a little lower, who can but turn over any two leaves of the first tome of the Councils, and not fall upon some passage that may settle his assurance this way? Those ancient canons which carry the name of the apostles are exceedingly frequent in the distinction. They speak of the bishops or presbyters offering on the altar of God, which no layman might do: they make an act against a bishop’s or presbyter’s rejection of his wife under pretence of religion, which in a layman was never questioned: they forbid a bishop, presbyter, or deacon, to meddle with any secular cares or employments; a laic person had no reason to be so restrained: shortly (for we might here easily weary our reader), the ninth of their canons is punctual, which plainly reckons up the bishop, presbyter, and deacon, as of the priestly list; and in the fourteenth, “if any presbyter or deacon, or whosoever else of the clergy.”

Dionysius, the misnamed Areopagite, hath *ἐπίρχεις* and *ἐπέας*, for bishops and presbyters; and the holy martyr, Cyprian, “*Cum episcopo presbyteri sacerdotali honore conjuncti*—the presbyters joined with the bishop in priestly honour.” What shall I need to urge how often in the ancient councils they are styled by the name of *ἐρείς*, priests, and how by those venerable synods they have the offices and employments of only priests and clergymen put upon them? Our two learned bishops, Dr. Bilson and Dr. Downam, have so cleared this point, that my labour herein would be but superfluous: I refer my reader to their unquestionable instances. One thing let me add not un-

worthy of observation. I shall desire no other author to confute this opinion of the lay presbytery than Ærius himself, the only ancient enemy of episcopacy. "What is a bishop (saith he) other than a presbyter? &c. There is but one order, one honour of both. Doth the bishop impose hands?—so doth the presbyter. Doth the bishop administer baptism?—so doth the presbyter. The bishop dispenseth God's service—so doth the presbyter," &c. Thus he. Lo, there is but one professed enemy to bishops in all the history of the Church, and he, in the very act of his opposition to episcopacy, mars the fashion of the lay presbytery. He could not, *in terminis*, directly oppose it: indeed, how should he oppose that which never was? But he attributes such acts and offices to a presbyter as never any laic durst usurp—such as never were, never could be ascribed to any that was not consecrated to God by an holy ordination. Had this man, then, but dreamed of a lay presbytery, either to supply or affront episcopacy, it might have been some countenance—at least, to the age of this invention; but now the device liath not so much patrocination (pardon a harsh word) as of an old stigmatic; yea, it is quashed by the sole and only mar-prelate of the ancient Church.

Ambrose's testimony urged for Lay Elders fully answered.

YET let me eat my word betimes, while it is hot. There is an holy and ancient bishop, they say, that pleads for a lay presbytery; and who should that be but the godly and renowned Archbishop and Metropolitan of Milain, St. Ambrose—a man noted, as for singular sanctimony, so for the height of his spirit, and zeal of maintaining the right of his function. And what will he say? "Unde et synagoga, et postea etiam ecclesia seniores habuit, &c.—Whereupon (saith he) both the synagogue, and afterwards the church also, had certain elders, or ancient men, without whose counsel nothing was done in the church; which, by what negligence it is now out of use, I know not, except, perhaps, it were by the floth of the teachers, or rather by their pride, for that they would seem to be of some reckoning alone." Here is all: and now let me beseech my reader to rouse up himself a little, and with some more than ordinary attention to listen to this evidence, on which alone, for any likely pretence of antiquity, so great a cause wholly dependeth. And, first, let him hear that this is no Ambrose, but a counterfeit, even by the confession of the greatest favourers of the lay presbytery, who, that they would thus easily turn off the

chief (if not the only) countenance of their cause, it is to me a wonder; but they well saw, if they had not done it, it would have been done for them. Possevine thinks he finds Pelagianism in this Commentary upon the Epistles. Both Whitaker and Bellarmine disclaim it for Ambrose's: the latter pitches it upon an heretic, even the same which was the author of the book of the Questions of the Old and New Testament; Hilary the deacon, and the former, doth little other, whilst he cites and seems to allow the Censors of Lovane, to this purpose. Maldonate casts it upon Remigius Lugdunensis, who lived in the year 870, far from any authentic antiquity; and confidently says, "No man that ever read Ambrose's writings can think these to be his." It is, then, first, no great matter what this witness saith; but yet let us hear him: "Unde synagoga (saith he)—Whereupon the synagogue, and after the church also, had elders." And whereupon was this spoken, I beseech you? Let my reader but take the foregoing words with him, and see if he can forbear to smile at the conceit. The words run thus, upon occasion of St. Paul's charge, "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father," &c.: "For the honour of age, the elder in years is by meekness to be provoked to a good work, &c. For (saith he) amongst all nations everywhere old age is honourable."* And so infers, "Whereupon both the synagogue, and afterwards the church, had certain elders, or ancient men, without whose counsel nothing was done in the church." Plainly the words are spoken of an elder in age, not any elder in office. And so Paul's words import, too, for it follows, "The elder women as mothers:" and I suppose no man will think St. Paul meant to ordain eldresses in the Church. Thus, in the supposed Ambrose, all runs upon this strain: for there is "*honorificentia ætatis*—the honorificence of age;" "*majores natu, honorabilis senectus*—no intimation of any office in the Church." But you will say, here is mention of the elders that the synagogue had. True, but not as judges, but only as aged persons, whose experience might get them skill, and gravity procure them reverence. And such the Church had, too, and made use of their counsel; and therefore it follows, "*quorum sine consilio*—without whose counsel nothing was done in the Church." He saith not, without whose authority. These, then, for aught this place implieth, were not incorporated in any consistory, but for their prudence advised with upon occasion. And what is

* "*Propter honorificentiam ætatis, majorem natu cum mansuetudine ad bonum opus provocandum, &c. Nam apud omnes ubique gentes honorabilis est senectus.*"

this to a fixed bench of lay presbyters? Or if there were such a settled college of presbyters in ancient use (as Ignatius implies), yet where are the lay? They were certain ancient experienced divines, who upon all difficult occasions were ready to give their advice and aid to their bishop. How little the true Ambrose dreamed of any other, let him be consulted in his noble, humble, and yet stout epistle to the Emperor Valentinian, where that worthy pattern of prelates well shows how ill it could be brooked, that persons merely laic or secular should have any hand in judging and ordering of matters spiritual. Yea, for this very pretended Ambrose, how far he was from thinking of a lay presbytery, let himself speak, who, in the very same chapter, upon those words, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour," construes those elders for "boni dispensatores ac fideles;" and because you may think this may well enough fit laic presbyters, he adds, "Evangelizantes regnum Dei—those that preach the kingdom of God:" and again, "Adversus presbyterum, &c.—against a presbyter receive not an accusation," &c.; because (saith he), "Ordinis hujus sublimis est honor—the honour of this order is high, for they are the vicars of Christ, and therefore an accusation of this person is not easily to be admitted; for it ought to seem incredible to us that this man, who is God's priest, should live criminally." Thus he: so as this Ambrose's presbyters are no other, in his sense, than God's priests and Christ's vicars. If our lay presbyters, then, have a mind to be called priests and vicars, their Ambrose is for them; else he is not worthy of his fee for what he hath said.

If all antiquity have yielded any other witness worth the producing, how gladly should we hear him out, and return him a satisfactory answer. But the truth is, never any man thought of such a project; and therefore, if any author have let fall some favourable word that might seem to bolster it, it must be against his will. Neither did any living man, before some burgesses of Geneva in our age took it upon them, ever claim or manage such an office since Christ was upon the earth.

The utter disagreement and irresolution of the pretenders to the new discipline, concerning the particualar state of the desired government.

ALL this considered, I cannot but wonder and grieve to hear a man, of such worth as Beza was, so transported as to say that this presbytery of their device is the tribunal of Christ—a tri-

bunal erected above fifteen hundred years after his departure from us—an invisible tribunal to all the rest of God's Church besides—a tribunal not known nor resolved of by those that call it so. Surely our blessed Saviour was never ashamed to own his ordinance; neither was he ever so reserved as not to show his own crown and sceptre to all his good subjects: he never cared for an outward glorious magnificence; but that spiritual port which he would have kept in his government, he was far from concealing and smothering in a suspicious secrecy. If this, then, be or were Christ's tribunal, where, when, how, in whom, wherefore was it set up? Who sees not that the wood whereof it is framed is so green that it warps every way? Plainly the sworn men to this exotical government are not agreed of their verdict: an exquisite form they would fain have, but what it was, or what it should be, they accord not. Even amongst our own, in the admonition to the Parliament, in 1572, a perfect platform is tendered—not so perfect yet, but two years after it is altered; nine years after that, anno 1583, a new draught, fit for the English meridian, is published; yet that not so exact, but that Travers must have a new essay to it (29 Eliz.) And, after all this, a world of doubts yet arise, which were, in 1588, debated at Coventry, Cambridge, and elsewhere. And yet still, when all is done, the fraternity is as far to seek, in very many points, for resolution, as at the first day; yea, at this very hour fain would I know whether they can ring this peal without jars. It is not long ago, I am sure, that they found every parcel of their government litigious. Cartwright is for a presbytery in every parish wheresoever a pastor is; and his late clients make every village a Church, absolute and independent. The Genevan fashion is otherwise; neither doth Danæus think it to be Christ's institution, to have every parish thus furnished and governed. Our late humorists give power of excommunication, and other censures, to every parish presbytery: the Belgic Churches allow it not to every particular congregation, without the counsel and assent of the general consistory. There are that hold the elders should be perpetual; there are others for a triennial, others for a biennial eldership; others hold them fit to be changed, so oft as their liveries, once a year. "The elders (says one) are jointly to execute, with their pastor, the election and abdication of all their ecclesiastical officers." "Not so (replies his antagonist); soli pastores—only the pastors must do it." And good reason. What a monster of opinions it is that laymen should lay on hands to the ordination of ministers! I wonder these men fear not Uzziah's death, or Uzziah's leprosy. There are that doubt whether there should be doctors in every Church; and I am

deceived if, in Scotland, you do not hold your consistories perfect without them. There are that hold them so necessary a member of this body of Christ's ordinance, that it is utterly maimed and imperfect without them. And, indeed, what to make of their doctors, neither themselves know, nor any for them. To make them a distinct office from pastors, as it is an uncouth conceit, and quite besides the text, which tells of some evangelists, some prophets, some pastors and doctors (and not some pastors and some doctors), so it is guilty of much error and wildness of consequence. For how is it possible that spiritual food and teaching should be severed? Who can feed the soul, and not instruct it? Or who can teach wholesome doctrine, and not feed the soul? This is as if every child should have two nurses—one to give it the bib, another the breast—one to hold the dish, and the other to put in the spoon. Now if doctors must be, whether in every parish one; whether admitted to sit and vote in the presbytery, and to have their hand in censures or not; or whether they be laymen, or of the clergy; whether as academical readers, or as rural catechists; are things so utterly undetermined, that they are, indeed, altogether undecidable. As for deacons, there is, if it may be, yet more uncertainty amongst them, whether they be necessary in the constitution of the Church, or whether members of the consistory, or not; whether they should be only employed in matter of the purse, or in the matters of God—or, if so, how far interested; whether fixed or moveable—and, if so, in what circle. And, lest there should be any passage of this admired government free from doubt, even the very widows have their brawls. These, to some, are as essential as the best; to others, like to some ceremonies, of which Junius's judgment was, "Not to be refused where they are, and not to be missed where they are not." * However, I see not why the good women should not put in for a share, and chide with the elders to be shut out. These, which I have abstracted from our judicious surveyor, and an hundred other doubts concerning the extent and managing of the new consistory, are enough to let an ingenuous reader see on what shelves of sand this late allobroical device is erected. Shortly, then, let the abettors of the discipline pretended lay their heads together, and agree what it is that we may trust to for Christ's ordinance; and, that once done, let them expect our condescent: till then (and we shall desire no longer), let them forbear to gild their own fancies with the glorious name of Christ's kingdom.

* "Si adsint non recuso, si absint non desiderio."

The imperfections and defects which must needs be yielded to follow upon the discipline pretended, and the necessary inconveniences that must attend it in a kingdom otherwise settled.

THIS uncertainty of opinion cannot choose but produce an answerable imperfection in the practice; while some Churches, which hold themselves in a parochial absoluteness, necessarily furnished with all the equipage of discipline, must needs find those defective which want it: so as the Genevan and French Churches, and those of their correspondence, which go all by divisions of presbyteries, must needs, by our late reformers, be found to come short of that perfection of Christ's kingdom which themselves have attained. Those Churches which have no doctors, those which have no deacons, those which have no widows, what case are they in? And how few have all these.

Neither is the imperfection more palpable and fatal, where these ordinances are missing, than is the absurdity and inconvenience of entertaining them where they are wished to be; for howsoever, where some new state is to be erected (especially in a popular form), or a new city to be contrived, with power of making their own laws, there might, perhaps, be some possibility of complying, in way of policy, with some of the rules of this pretended Church government; yet certainly, in a monarchial state fully settled, and a kingdom divided into several townships and villages, some whereof are small and far distant from the rest, no human wit can comprehend how it were possible, without an utter subversion, to reduce it to these terms, I shall take leave to instance in some particulars, the strong inexpediencies and difficulties whereof will arise to little less than either gross absurdity or utter impossibility. Can it, therefore, be possible, in such a kingdom as our happy England is, where there are thousands of small village parishes—I speak according to the plots of our own latest reformers—for every parish to furnish an ecclesiastical consistory, consisting of one or more pastors, a doctor, elders, and deacons? Perhaps there are not so many houses as offices are required; and whom shall they then be judges of? And some of these so far remote from neighbours that they cannot participate of theirs, either teaching or censure. And if this were feasible, what stuff would there be. Perhaps a young, indiscreet, giddy pastor; and for a doctor, who, and where, and what? John a Nokes and John a Stiles, the elders; Smug, the smith, a deacon; and whom or what should these rule, but themselves and their ploughshares? And what censures, trow we, would this grave consistory inflict? What decisions would they make of the doubts and controversies

of their parish? What orders of government? For even this parochial Church hath the sovereignty of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. If any of the fautors of the desired discipline dares deny this, let him look to argue the case with his best friends, who all are for this, or nothing. Else what means Cartwright to say, that in such cases God pours out his gifts upon men called to these functions, and makes them all new men? Here are no miracles to be expected, no enthusiasms: an honest thatcher will know how to hand his straw no whit better after his election than he did before, and was as deeply politic before as now, and equally wise and devout, though perhaps he may take upon him some more state and gravity than he formerly did. And what a mad world would it be, that the ecclesiastical laws of such a company should be, like those of the Medes and Persians, irrevocable!—that there should be no appeal from them! For as for classes and synods, they may advise in cases of doubt, but overrule they may not. And if a king should, by occasion of his court fixed in some such obscure parish, fall into the censure, even of such a consistory or presbytery, where is he? Excommunicable he is with them; and what then may follow, let a Buchanan speak.

Now were it possible that an Hockley in the hole, or, as Cartwright pleases to instance, an Hitchin, or Newington, could yield us choice of such a worthy senate, yet whence shall the maintenance arise? Surely, as the host said upon occasion of a guest with too many titles, we have not meat for so many. It is well if a poor and painful incumbent can but live. But “whence (as the disciples said) should we have bread for all these?” And what do you think of this lawless polycoirany? That every parish minister and his eldership should be a bishop and his consistory—yea, a pope and his conclave of cardinals within his own parish, not subject to a controlment, nor liable to a superior censure? What do you think of the power of a layman to bind and loose? What of the equal power of votes, in spiritual causes, with their grave and learned pastor? What that those which are no ministers should meddle with the sacraments, or should meddle with the word, and not with sacraments? To see a velvet cloak, a gilt rapier, and glingling spurs, attending God’s table? To see a ruling elder a better man than his pastor? Who knows not that it is the project of Beza, and the present practice of Scotland, that noblemen or great senators should be elders, and perhaps, at Geneva, deacons too? And then how well will it become the house that great lords should

* Polycoirany, the government of the many.

yield their chaplains to be the better men? For, as saith honest Danæus, who knew the fashion well, "the place of the elders is utterly unlike and below the order of pastors." Neither, methinks, should it work any contenting peace to their great spirits, to hear that, upon their consistorial bench, their peasantly tenant is as good as the best of them; and that if they look awry to be so matched they disdain not men, but Christ. These are but a handful of those strange incongruities which will necessarily attend this misaffected discipline; which certainly, if they were not countervailed with other no less unjust contentments, could never find entertainment in any corner of the world. But each man would rule; and to be a king, though of a mole-hill, is happiness enough. Had men learned to inure their hearts to a peaceable and godly humility, these quarrels had never been.

The known newness of this invention, and the quality of the late authors of it.

BUT that which is, above all other exceptions, most undeniable, and not least convictive, and which I beseech the reader in the bowels of Christ to lay most seriously to heart, is the most manifestly spick-and-span newness of this devised discipline; for all wise and staid Christians have learned to suspect, if not to hate, novelty in those things which are pretended to be the matters of God. In matter of evidence, they are old records that will carry it. As the Ancient of Days is immutable and eternal, so his truths are like him—not changeable by time, not decayed by age. Who was the father of this child, I profess I know not, otherwise than I have specified in my promonition to the reader. I am sure Calvin disclaims it, who, in his epistle to Cardinal Sadolet, hath thus: "I, for my part, profess to be one of them whom you do so hostilely inveigh against; for although I was called thither (to Geneva) after the religion was settled, and the form of the Church corrected, yet, because those things which were done by Farell and Viret I did not only by my suffrage allow, but what in me lay laboured to conserve and ratify, I cannot hold my cause any whit different from theirs." Thus he: so as he professeth only to be the nurse-father of that issue which was begot by a meaner parent. It is true, those other were men of note too, but, for aught I know, as much for their exuberance of zeal, as for any extraordinary worth of parts. Farell, indeed, was called "*Flagellum sacrificulorum*—the scourge of mass priests;" and what he did for

the reformation of religion, I am as apt to acknowledge and applaud as the forwardest: but that he preached somewhere in the very streets, and even (*quamvis renitente magistratu*) in St. Peter's Church, was not to be bragged of by himself or his friends. And in his violent carriage in the animating of the people to the outing of their bishop, Peter Balma (though perhaps faulty enough), and the introducing of this new form of government, I wish he had lived and died in his *Vapincum*. His coadjutor in this work was, I perceive, one Anthony Frumentius, a vehement young man, who was set up by the people to preach upon a fish-stall, and no doubt equally hardened his auditors to this tumultuous way of proceeding; but then, when Viret came once into the file, here was, at the least, fervour enough. The spirit of that man is well seen in his "Dialogue of White Devils." These were the founders of that discipline; men of eminence, we must believe, but far inferior to Calvin, who came into Geneva first as a lecturer or preacher, and then became their pastor; insomuch, as Zanchy reports, when Calvin preached at St. Peter's, and Viret at St. Gervase's, concurrent sermons, a Frenchman, asked why he did not come sometimes and hear Viret, answered, "If St. Paul should come and preach in the same hour with Calvin, I would leave Paul, and hear Calvin:"* which was spoken like a good blasphemous zealot; but it is not to be wondered at in men of such spirits. I told you before what Calvin himself writes to Farell. There was one at Basil who professed to attribute "not less to Farell than to St. Paul."† O God, whither doth mad zeal hurry men? It appears, then, that Farell and Viret rough-hewed this statue, which Calvin after polished; and we now know *Consulem ac Diem*, and I doubt not but some do yet live who might know the man. For me, although I have not age enough to have known the father of this discipline, yet one of the godfathers of it I did know, who, after his peregrination in Germany and Geneva, undertook for this new-born infant at our English font; under whose ministry my younger years were spent—the author of that bitter dialogue betwixt Miles Monopodius and Bernard Blinkard, one of the hottest and busiest sticklers in these quarrels at Frankfort. So young is this form of government, being until that day unheard of in the Christian world; in which name Peter Ramus, though a man censured for affecting innovations in logic and philosophy, is, if we may credit his old friend

* "Si veniret Sanctus Paulus qui eadem horâ concionaretur quâ et Calvinus, ego, relicto Paulo, audirem Calvinum."

† "Non minus Farello quàm Paulo."

Carpentarius, said to dislike it, and to frump it by the name of "Talmud Subaudicum."

I cannot be ignorant of the common plea of the pretenders, that so far is this form from novelty as that it was the most ancient and first model of Church government under the apostles. Thus they say, and they alone say it; all they have to say more, in colour of reason for it, is, that the twelve apostles themselves were all equal. What then? If their pretended form were bred from thence, where hath it lain hid all this while till now? That they can tell you too: under the tyranny and usurpation of Antichrist. Dear Christians, I hope you now believe it, that the very apostles themselves, who lived to see and act the establishment of episcopacy, would betray the Church at their parting to that man of sin—that all the holy fathers and martyrs of the primitive Church were, either through ignorance or will, guilty of this sacrilegious treachery—that all the eyes of the whole world were blind, till this city, which was once, indeed, dedicated to the sun, and bears it still for her emblem, enlightened them; and if ye can believe these strange suggesters, wonder ye at them, whilst I do no less wonder at you.

But, withal, give me leave to put you in mind that this is a stale plea for more unholy opinions than one. The Anabaptists, when they are urged with the Church's ancient practice of baptizing of infants, straight pretend that this ill guise was brought in by Popery, and is a parcel of the mystery of iniquity. The new Arians of our times, hellish heretics, when they are pressed with the distinction of three persons in the Deity, and one infinite Essence, straight cry out of Antichrist, and clamour that this doctrine was hatched under that secret mystery of iniquity. The father of the Familists, a worse devil, if possible, than they, in his "*Evangelium Regni*," sings the very same note for his damnable plot of doctrine and government, sadly complaining of Antichrist, and that the light of life hath lain hid under the mask of Popery until this day of love; and now he comes to erect his "elders of the holy understanding," and his other rabble.

Beware, therefore, I advise you, how you take up this challenge, but upon better grounds: disgrace not God's truth with the odious name of Antichristianism; honour not Antichrist with the claim and title of an holy truth; confess the device new, and make your best of it. But if any man will pretend this government hath been in the world before, though no footsteps remain of it in any history or record, he may as well tell me there hath been of old a passage from the Teneriff to the moon, though never any but a Gonzaga discovered it.

LAY BAPTISM.

BY

DANIEL WATERLAND, D.D., MASTER OF MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

TO THE REV. MR. P——, RECTOR OF L——.

M. C. October 29, 1713.

REVEREND SIR,—I humbly thank you for your very obliging letter, wherein you do me too much honour, to suppose me either equal to so large and difficult a subject, or able to hold the argument, however just and good, against the ingenious and learned Mr. ——.

Nevertheless, I should think myself very happy, could my affairs permit me to accept of your kind invitation, because I am sure the conversation of two such worthy persons could not but be both agreeable and edifying; and if I should lose my cause, I should still be a gainer. However, till opportunity favours me with what I much wish for, be pleased to take a few thoughts in writing, as they occur to me amidst a crowd of other business, and to excuse either the inaccuracy of style and method, or any hasty slips of a running pen.

I am not at all surprised at Mr. Kelsall's judgment on the case. It is not very long since I was myself of the same opinion, being led to it, as I suppose he may, partly by the good-nature of it, and partly by the authority of great names, as the Bishops of Sarum and Oxford, &c., besides some passages of antiquity not well understood; and I was pleased, I confess, to see all, as I thought, confirmed by Mr. Bingham's "Scholastical History of Lay Baptism." But second thoughts and farther views have given a turn to my judgment, and robbed me of a pleasing error, as I must now call it, which I was much inclined to embrace for a truth, and could yet wish that it were so.

The argument or scruples, mentioned in your letter, have all, besides many more, been considered, canvassed, and answered, carefully, solidly, and, in my humble opinion, fully and completely. If Mr. Kelsall had seen Mr. Lawrence's Answer to Mr. Bingham, I hardly think he could despise that gentleman's learning or judgment. But I must have a care of being too positive, lest I

should seem too far to trust my own, or to pay too little deference to his, which I have a great value and veneration for.

I have sent what papers I had by me relating to the controversy: and some I had lent out, otherwise you would have had all.

It were needless for me to say anything in the cause, after what had been said infinitely better: only, to give you a little present ease, till you can have leisure to peruse the whole controversy, I shall venture to offer a few things about it.

The cause depends upon Scripture, antiquity, and reason.

I. As to Scripture, it is confessed that it confines the administration of baptism to the clergy, as much as it does any other of the sacerdotal powers. The commission is plain and clear, and certainly leaves no more room for lay baptism than for lay ordination, lay absolution, lay consecration of the eucharist, lay preaching and praying. If, therefore, we take the liberty of going from the institution in one case, we may as reasonably do it in all, supposing the like necessity. And yet Scripture hath nowhere intimated that we may do it in any; but has rather taught us by some severe examples, as in the case of Saul and Uzza, that positive ministrations, confined by the institution of them to certain rules or persons, must rather be left unperformed, than performed irregularly.

This perhaps you will grant, but still will insist upon it that they are valid to the recipients, though against rules and orders: and here the maxim, “*Quod fieri non debuit factum valet*,” is brought in to confirm it, and the instance in the case of marriage is also thought to be pertinently alleged, as if the case were parallel. But to all this it is answered—

1. That the maxim mentioned is true only of errors in circumstantialia, not of errors in essentials. Suppose a man to marry his sister, or a second wife, while the first is living—here is an error in essentials, and the fact is null and void, notwithstanding the maxim, *quod fieri, &c.*

2. It is asserted, that though the minister be not essential to marriage, yet to baptism he is. In marriage, it is decent that it be done by a priest or deacon; in baptism, it is necessary. Marriage is a covenant between the two parties—its essence is their mutual contract; the minister is a circumstance only. Baptism implies a covenant between God and man—its essence is mutual contract in such manner and form as is appointed. The administrator acts for God, and in God’s name, which none can do without commission from him. Such commission, therefore, is essential; and without it the whole is void, as much as if I should pretend to act in the queen’s name, without order or war-

rant, to levy soldiers, naturalize strangers, or anything of like nature. All would be null and void, and the maxim of *quod fieri, &c.*, would here be false and impertinent.

3. To this I add, that from your own concession, that a "layman is guilty of a sin in the very act of baptizing," it seems to follow that the act is void. I never could well digest that assertion, that it is sinful in the administrator, and yet valid to the receiver. It is a hard saying, that one may be damned for doing that, without which the other could not be saved. I suspect some fallacy in this, though where it lies I cannot perhaps tell you. Were I a layman, and thought that the salvation of any one or more depended upon my baptizing them, I would certainly do it: but then I could not think it a sin, but a duty, as one of the highest acts of charity, to do it. How will you get off this, but by saying, that if it is a sin in the administrator, it is likewise ineffectual to the receiver? If the salvation of another depends upon it, it is certainly no sin: therefore, say I, if it be a sin, it can be so only in such cases as where nothing depends upon it—that is, wherever such baptism is sinful in the whole act, or ought not to have been given, it is void. I will not be positive in this argument, being sensible it wants many distinctions and cautions to make it go down, which I have not room to consider. But I am persuaded it is right in the main, and well deserves some farther consideration.

Having seen, then, that Scripture gives no commission to any but the clergy to baptize, that therefore lay baptisms are unauthorized and sinful, and therefore, as I have endeavoured to prove, invalid, notwithstanding the exceptions brought to the contrary—I now proceed to a distinct argument drawn from the judgment and practice of the ancients.

II. The ancients do, with one voice, for above three hundred years, condemn lay baptism, not so much as putting in any exception for cases of necessity. Tertullian, indeed, within that time, does speak in favour of it; but it is only his own private opinion, and founded upon a very weak reason. Him I except. All the rest are for us, or not against us. But Mr. Kelsall thinks, that though the ancients did condemn lay baptism as not fit to be; yet, if it was given, they thought it valid, and never to be repeated. This I very much want to see proved, or so much as probably inferred, from anything that occurs in the ancientest writings.

I know that irregular heretical baptisms were allowed to be valid both before and after St. Cyprian's time (though he himself and some other bishops differed in their judgment and practice in that point from other Churches, and appealed to ancient

custom in defence of themselves); and I scruple not to own that, within a while, it became a constant rule, in most Churches, that such heretical or schismatical baptisms should stand good, provided they were administered in the name of the Trinity. If this be what Mr. Kelsall attempts to prove by "the many and great authorities" you speak of, it is readily granted, nor will any one dispute so clear a point with him. But then it is insisted upon that this proves nothing for lay baptisms. Those heretical and schismatical baptisms were not lay baptisms; or, if they were, those very Churches that allowed them to be valid would have annulled them: they were administered by men of a sacerdotal character, and on that account were reputed valid. It was thought that neither schism, nor heresy, nor any censures of the Church, could deprive them of the indelible character; so that at any time, if they returned into the Church, they were received in without being re-ordained. Upon this ground their baptisms were esteemed valid, and so were not reiterated; or those Churches, who for a time did re-baptize, did it because they thought heresy and schism nulled the orders of heretical and schismatical priests, and consequently their baptisms, and every other ministerial performance of theirs. The question in those times was not, whether lay baptisms were null, both sides supposing that as an undoubted principle; but whether heresy and schism nulled orders, and reduced heretical priests to mere laymen. It was at length determined in the negative. And therefore the baptisms of heretical or schismatical priests or deacons, if administered in the name of the Trinity, were received as valid, having all the essentials of baptism—water, commission, and form.

If I am mistaken in this, upon which the whole controversy in great measure depends, I shall be glad to be set right; and I shall be farther thankful to Mr. Kelsall if he will give me but one plain authority, except Tertullian, for the validity of lay baptism, as such, before St. Austin.

If I have thus got over "the many and great authorities," the other smaller objections will be easily dealt with.

You say, we hereby unchurch the reformed Churches abroad.

We answer, that this principle of the invalidity of lay baptism, which several of them hold as well as we, does not unchurch them, if their want of episcopal ordination doth not, which is a distinct question. If their orders are good, their baptisms are so too. If you deny them that, they will not thank you for the other.

As to our own Church, we hope the consequences drawn from this principle are not so black and tragical as is imagined; and many reasons might be given to show that they are not:

but this were needless and tedious. Suppose the worst: the argument is weak and inconclusive. A doctrine condemns thousands, therefore it is false. Apply this to the doctrine of the necessity of holiness, which condemns more; apply it to the doctrines we hold against the Church of Rome, which condemns more than all the Protestants, perhaps, put together; apply it to the doctrine of salvation by Christ alone, which condemns millions, or, may be, five parts in six of the whole world. Are the doctrines therefore false? No, surely. To what purpose, then, is it to allege the multitudes concerned in the consequences of them? The argument, if it proves anything, proves this only—that the age has been either very ignorant, or very corrupt, to reject sound doctrine, and that it wants to be reformed, and to be instructed better. And I hope this may be a sufficient answer to what you hint of the Act of Toleration, and French Refugees; though it may be said, farther, that a man's want of valid baptism, if he is episcopally ordained, does not void his ministerial performances. A man may have orders and authority to make others what he is not himself; as one, that is not himself free, may by commission make others so. This you will see enlarged upon very handsomely by Mr. Lawrence and Dr. Brett. And if this point be well settled, as I think it is, it takes off very much from the force of your objection of the many and unavoidable ill consequences of our doctrine of the invalidity of lay baptism. But why should I be farther tedious? You have the books from whence I have taken my hints, and what I have here written is little more than an extract from them. Be pleased to peruse the whole controversy, and give me your thoughts as frankly as I have given mine. If yourself or Mr. Kelsall will be so kind, as either to clear my apprehension on any points which are yet to me obscure, or to set me right where I am wrong, the favour will be accepted with all possible thankfulness and respect by,

Good Sir, your most affectionate, humble servant,

D. W.

P. S.—I ventured to show this letter to a very learned and considerable man here, who came occasionally to see me; and he was pleased to give me his approbation.

BAPTISM BY WOMEN.*

BY RICHARD HOOKER, M.A.

To leave private baptism, therefore, and to come unto baptism by women, which they say is no more a sacrament than any other ordinary washing or bathing of a man's body. The reason whereupon they ground their opinion herein is such as, making baptism by women void because women are no ministers in the Church of God, must needs generally annihilate the baptism of all unto whom their conceit shall apply this exception, whether it be in regard of sex, of quality, of insufficiency, or whatsoever; for if want of calling do frustrate baptism, they that baptize without calling do nothing, be they women or men. To make women teachers in the house of God were a gross absurdity, seeing the apostle hath said, "I permit not a woman to teach:" and again, "Let your women in churches be silent." Those extraordinary gifts in speaking with tongues and prophesying, which God at that time did not only bestow upon men, but on women also, made it the harder to hold them confined with private bounds. Wherenpon the apostle's ordinance was necessary against women's public admission to teach. And because, when law hath begun some one thing or other well, it giveth good occasion either to draw by judicious exposition out of the very law itself, or to annex to the law by authority and jurisdiction things of like convenience, therefore Clement extendeth this apostolic constitution to baptism. "For (saith he) if we have denied them leave to teach, how should any man dispense with nature, and make them ministers of holy things; seeing this unskillfulness is a part of the Grecians' impiety, which, for the service of women goddesses, have women priests?" I somewhat marvel that men, which would not willingly be thought to speak or write but with good conscience, dare hereupon openly avouch Clement for a witness, that "as when the Church began not only to decline, but to fall away from the sincerity of religion, it borrowed a number of other profanations of the heathens, so it borrowed this, and would needs have women priests as the heathens had, and that this was one occasion of bringing baptism by women into the Church of God." Is it

* The tract of Hooker is given as embodying the arguments of those who differ with Waterland, as to the *validity* of *unlawful* baptism.

not plain in their own eyes that, first, by an evidence which forbiddeth women to be ministers of baptism, they endeavour to show how women were admitted unto that function in the wane and declination of Christian piety; secondly, that by an evidence rejecting the heathens, and condemning them of impiety, they would prove such affection towards heathens, as ordereth the affairs of the Church by the pattern of their example; and, thirdly, that out of an evidence which nameth the heathens, as being in some part a reason why the Church had no women priests, they gather the heathens to have been one of the first occasions why it had? So that, throughout every branch of this testimony, their issue is *yea*, and their evidence directly *no*. But to women's baptism in private, by occasion of urgent necessity, the reasons that only concern ordinary baptism in public are no just prejudice; neither can we by force thereof disprove the practice of those Churches which (necessity requiring) allow baptism in private to be administered by women. We may not, from laws that prohibit anything with restraint, conclude absolute and unlimited prohibitions; although we deny not but they, which utterly forbid such baptism, may have, perhaps, wherewith to justify their orders against it. For even things lawful are well prohibited, when there is fear lest they make the way, too unlawful, more easy. And, it may be, the liberty of baptism by women, at such times, doth sometimes embolden the rasher sort to do it where no such necessity is. But whether of permission besides law, or in presumption against law, they do it, is it thereby altogether frustrate, void, and as though it were never given? They which have not at the first their right baptism, must of necessity be re-baptized, because the law of Christ tieth all men to receive baptism. Iteration of baptism once given hath been always thought a manifest contempt of that ancient apostolic aphorism, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism"—baptism not only one inasmuch as it hath everywhere the same substance, and offereth unto all men the same grace, but one also for that it ought not to be received by any one man above once. We serve that Lord which is but one, because no other can be joined with him; we embrace that faith which is but one, because it admitteth no innovation; that baptism we receive which is but one, because it cannot be received often. For how should we practice iteration of baptism, and yet teach that we are by baptism born anew—that by baptism we are admitted into the heavenly society of saints—that those things be really and effectually done by baptism, which are no more possible to be often done, than a man can naturally be often born, or civilly be often adopted into any one's stock and

family? This also is the cause why they that present us unto baptism are entitled for ever after our parents in God, and the reason why there we receive new names, in token that by baptism we are made new creatures. As Christ hath, therefore, died and risen from the dead but once, so the sacrament which both extinguishes in him our former sins, and beginneth in us a new condition of life, is by one only actual administration for ever available, according to that in the Nicene Creed, "I believe one baptism for the remission of sins." And because second baptism was ever abhorred in the Church of God as a kind of incestuous birth, they that iterate baptism are driven, under some pretence or other, to make the former baptism void.

Tertullian, the first that proposed to the Church—Agrippinus, the first in the Church that accepted, and against the use of the Church—Novatian, the first that publicly began to practise, rebaptization, did it therefore upon these two grounds—a true persuasion that baptism is necessary, and a false, that the baptism which others administered was no baptism. Novatianus's conceit was, that none can administer true baptism but the true Church of Jesus Christ—that he and his followers alone were the Church; and for the rest he accounted them wicked and profane persons, such as by baptism could cleanse no man, unless they first did purify themselves, and reform the faults wherewith he charged them. At which time St. Cyprian, with the greatest part of the African bishops, because they likewise thought that none but only the true Church of God can baptize, and were of nothing more certainly persuaded than that heretics are as rotten branches cut off from the life and body of the true Church, gathered hereby that the Church of God both may, with good consideration, and ought to reverse that baptism which is given by heretics. These held and practised their own opinion, yet with great protestations, often made, that they neither loved a whit the less, nor thought in any respect the worse of them that were of a contrary mind. In requital of which ingenious moderation, the rest that withstood them did it in peaceable sort, with very good regard had of them as of men in error, but not in heresy. The Bishop of Rome, against their novelties, upheld, as beseemed him, the ancient and true apostolic customs, till they, which unadvisedly before had erred, became in a manner all reconciled friends unto truth, and saw that heresy in the ministers of baptism could no way evacuate the force thereof; such heresy alone excepted, as, by reason of unsoundness in the highest articles of Christian faith, presumed to change, and, by changing, to maim the substance, the form of baptism. In which respect the Church did neither simply disannul, nor absolutely

ratify, baptism by heretics. For the baptism which Novatianists gave stood firm, whereas they whom Samosatzenians had baptized were re-baptized. It was likewise ordered, in the Council of Arles, that if any Arian did reconcile himself to the Church, they should admit him without new baptism, unless by examination they found him not baptized in the name of the Trinity. Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, maketh report, how there lived under him a man of good reputation, and of very ancient continuance in that Church, who, being present at the rites of baptism, and observing, with better consideration than ever before, what was there done, came, and with weeping submission craved of his bishop not to deny him baptism, the due of all which profess Christ, seeing it had been so long since his evil hap to be deceived by the fraud of heretics, and at their hands (which till now he never thoroughly and duly weighed) to take a baptism full fraught with blasphemous impieties—a baptism in nothing like unto that which the true Church of Christ useth. The bishop was greatly moved thereat, yet durst not adventure to re-baptize, but did the best he could to put him in good comfort, using much persuasion with him not to trouble himself with things that were past and gone—not, after so long continuance in the fellowship of God's people, to call now in question his first entrance. The poor man that saw himself in this sort answered, but not satisfied, spent afterwards his life in continual perplexity, whereof the bishop remained fearful to give release; perhaps too fearful, if the baptism were such as his own declaration importeth. For that substance which was rotten at the very first, is never by tract of time able to recover soundness. And where true baptism was not before given, the case of re-baptization is clear. But by this it appeareth that baptism is not void in regard of heresy, and therefore much less through any other moral defect in the minister thereof. Under which second pretence, Donatists, notwithstanding, took upon them to make frustrate the Church's baptism, and themselves to re-baptize their own fry. For whereas, some forty years after the martyrdom of blessed Cyprian, the emperor Diocletian began to persecute the Church of Christ, and, for the speedier abolishment of their religion, to burn up their sacred books, there were, in the Church itself, traditors content to deliver up the books of God by composition, to the end their own lives might be spared: which men growing thereby odious to the rest, whose constancy was greater, it fortuneth that after, when one Cæcilian was ordained bishop in the Church of Carthage, whom others endeavoured in vain to defeat, by excepting against him as a traditor, they whose accusations could not prevail desperately joined themselves in

one, and made a bishop of their own crew, accounting from that time forward their faction the only true and sincere Church.

The first bishop on that part was Majorinus, whose successor, Donatus, being the first that wrote in defence of their schism, the birds that were hatched before by others have their names from him. Arians and Donatists began both about one time: which heresies, according to the different strength of their own sinews, wrought as hope of success led them—the one with the choicest wits, the other with the multitude, so far that, after long and troublesome experience, the perfectest view men could take of both was hardly able to induce any certain determinate resolution, whether error may do more by the curious subtlety of sharp discourse, or else by the mere appearance of zeal and devout affection—the latter of which two aids gave Donatists, beyond all men's expectation, as great a sway as ever any schism or heresy had within that reach of the Christian world where it bred and grew; the rather, perhaps, because the Church, which neither greatly feared them, and besides had necessary cause to bend itself against others that aimed directly at a far higher mark—the Deity of Christ, was contented to let Donatists have theirs forth by the space of threescore years and above, even from ten years before Constantine till the time that Optatus, Bishop of Milevis, published his books against Parmenian. During which term, and the space of that schism's continuance afterwards, they had, besides many other secular and worldly means to help them forward, these special advantages. First, the very occasion of their breach with the Church of God, a just hatred and dislike of traditors, seemed plausible—they easily persuaded their hearers that such men could not be holy as held communion and fellowship with them that betray religion. Again, when, to dazzle the eyes of the simple, and to prove that it can be no Church which is not holy, they had in show and sound of words the glorious pretence of the Creed Apostolic, "I believe the holy Catholic Church;" we need not think it any strange thing that with the multitude they gained credit. And avouching that such as are not of the true Church can administer no true baptism, they had for this point whole volumes of St. Cyprian's own writing, together with the judgment of divers African synods, whose sentence was the same with his. Whereupon the Fathers were likewise, in defence of their just cause, very greatly prejudiced, both for that they could not enforce the duty of men's communion with a Church confessed to be in many things blameworthy, unless they should oftentimes seem to speak as half defenders of the faults themselves, or at the least not so vehement accusers thereof as their adversaries; and to withstand

iteration of baptism, the other branch of the Donatists' heresy, was impossible, without manifest and professed rejection of Cyprian, whom the world universally did in his lifetime admire as the greatest amongst prelates, and now honour as (not) the lowest in the kingdom of heaven. So true we find it by experience of all ages in the Church of God, that the teacher's error is the people's trial, harder and heavier by so much to bear, as he is in worth and regard greater that mispersuadeth them: although there were odds between Cyprian's cause and theirs, he differing from others of sounder understanding in that point, but not dividing himself from the body of the Church by schism, as did the Donatists. "For which cause (saith Vincentius) of one and the same opinion we judge, which may seem strange, the authors catholic, and the followers heretical—we acquit the masters and condemn the scholars; they are heirs of heaven which have written those books, the defenders whereof are trodden down to the pit of hell." The invectives of Catholic writers, therefore, against these are sharp; the words of imperial edicts by Honorius and Theodosius, made to bridle them, very bitter; the punishments severe, in revenge of their folly. Howbeit, for fear (as we may conjecture) lest much should be derogated from the baptism of the Church, and baptism by Donatists be more esteemed of than was meet—if, on the one side, that which heretics had done ill should stand as good, on the other side, that be reversed which the Catholic Church had well and religiously done—divers better-minded than advised men thought it fittest to meet with this inconvenience, by re-baptizing Donatists as well as they re-baptized Catholics. For stay whereof the same emperors saw it meet to give their law a double edge, whereby it might equally on both sides cut off, not only heretics which re-baptized whom they could pervert, but also Catholic and Christian priests which did the like unto such as before had taken baptism at the hands of heretics, and were afterwards reconciled to the Church of God. Donatists were, therefore, in process of time, though with much ado, wearied, and at the length worn out by the constancy of that truth which teacheth that evil ministers of good things are as torches, a light to others, a waste to none but themselves only, and that the foulness of their hands can neither any whit impair the virtue nor stain the glory of the mysteries of Christ. Now that which was done amiss by virtuous and good men—as Cyprian carried aside with hatred against heresy, and was, secondly, followed by Donatists, whom envy and rancour, covered with show of godliness, made obstinate to cancel whatsoever the Church did in the sacrament of baptism—hath of later days, in another respect, far different

from both the former, been brought freshly again into practice. For the Anabaptist re-baptizeth, because, in his estimation, the baptism of the Church is frustrate—for that we give it unto infants which have not faith; whereas, according unto Christ's institution, as they conceive it, true baptism should always presuppose actual belief in receivers, and is otherwise no baptism. Of these three errors there is not any but hath been able, at the least, to allege in defence of itself many fair probabilities.

Notwithstanding, since the Church of God hath hitherto always constantly maintained, that to re-baptize them which are known to have received true baptism is unlawful—that if baptism seriously be administered in the same element, and with the same form of words which Christ's institution teacheth, there is no other defect in the world that can make it frustrate, or deprive it of the nature of a true sacrament—and, lastly, that baptism is only then to be readministered when the first delivery thereof is void, in regard to the before-alleged imperfections, and no other—shall we now, in the case of baptism, which, having both for matter and form the substance of Christ's institution, is by a fourth sort of men voided for the only defect of ecclesiastical authority in the minister, think it enough that they blow away the force thereof with the bare strength of their very breath, by saying, “We take such baptism to be no more the sacrament of baptism than any other ordinary bathing to be a sacrament?”

It behoveth generally all sorts of men to keep themselves within the limits of their own vocation. And seeing God, from whom men's several degrees and pre-eminences do proceed, hath appointed them in his Church, at whose hands his pleasure is that we should receive both baptism and all other public medicinal helps of soul, perhaps thereby the more to settle our hearts in the love of our ghostly superiors, they have small cause to hope that with him their voluntary services will be accepted, who thrust themselves into functions either above their capacity or besides their place, and over boldly intermeddle with duties whereof no charge was ever given them. They that in anything exceed the compass of their own order, do as much as in them lieth to dissolve that order which is the harmony of God's Church. Suppose, therefore, that in these, and the like considerations, the law did utterly prohibit baptism to be administered by any other than persons thereunto solemnly consecrated, what necessity soever happen, are not many things firm, being done, although in part done otherwise than positive rigour and strictness did require? Nature, as much as is possible, inclineth unto validities and preservations. Dissolutions and nullities

of things done are not only not favoured, but hated, when either urged without cause, or extended beyond their reach. If, therefore, at any time it come to pass, that, in teaching publicly or privately, in delivering this blessed sacrament of regeneration, some unsanctified hand, contrary to Christ's supposed ordinance, do intrude itself to execute that whereupon the laws of God and his Church have deputed others, which of these two opinions seemeth more agreeable with equity—ours, that disallow what is done amiss, yet make not the force of the word and sacraments, much less their nature and very substance, to depend on the minister's authority and calling; or else theirs, which defeat, disannul, and annihilate both, in respect of that one only personal defect, there being not any law of God which saith, that if the minister be incompetent, his word shall be no word, his baptism no baptism? He which teacheth, and is not sent, loseth the reward, but yet retaineth the name of a teacher; his usurped actions have in him the same nature which they have in others, although they yield him not the same comfort. And if these two cases be peers, the case of doctrine and the case of baptism both alike, since no defect in their vocation that teach the truth is able to take away the benefit thereof from him which heareth, wherefore should the want of a lawful calling in them that baptize make baptism to be vain? They grant that the matter and the form in sacraments are the only parts of substance, and that if these two be retained, albeit other things besides be used which are inconvenient, the sacrament, notwithstanding, is administered, but not sincerely. Why persist they not in this opinion, when by these fair speeches they have put us in hope of agreement? Wherefore sup they up their words again, interlacing such frivolous interpretations and glosses as disgrace their sentence? What should move them, having named the matter and the form of the sacrament, to give us presently warning that they mean, by the form of the sacrament, the institution, which exposition darkeneth whatsoever was before plain? For whereas, in common understanding, that form which, added to the element, doth make a sacrament, and is of the outward substance thereof, containeth only the words of usual application, they set it down (lest common dictionaries should deceive us) that the form doth signify, in their language, the institution; which institution, in truth, comprehendeth both form and matter. Such are their fumbling shifts to enclose the minister's vocation within the compass of some essential part of the sacrament—a thing that can never stand with sound and sincere construction. For what if the minister be no circumstance, but a subordinate efficient cause in the work of baptism?—what if the minister's

vocation be a matter of perpetual necessity, and not a ceremony, variable as times and occasions require?—what if his calling be a principal part of the institution of Christ?—doth it therefore follow that the minister's authority is of the substance of the sacrament, and as incident into the nature thereof as the matter and the form itself, yea, more incident? For whereas, in case of necessity, the greatest amongst them professeth the change of the element of water lawful; and others, which like not so well this opinion, could be better content that voluntarily the words of Christ's institution were altered, and men baptized in the name of Christ, without either mention made of the Father, or of the Holy Ghost; nevertheless, in denying that baptism administered by private persons ought to be reckoned of as a sacrament, they both agree. It may, therefore, please them both to consider that baptism is an action in part moral, in part ecclesiastical, and in part mystical: moral, as being a duty which men perform towards God; ecclesiastical, in that it belongeth unto God's Church as a public duty; finally, mystical, if we respect what God doth thereby intend to work.

The greatest moral perfection of baptism consisteth in men's devout obedience to the law of God, which law requireth both the outward act or thing done, and also that religious affection which God doth so much regard, that without it whatsoever we do is hateful in his sight; who, therefore, is said to respect adverbs more than verbs, because the end of his law, in appointing what we shall do, is our own perfection, which perfection consisteth chiefly in the virtuous disposition of the mind, and approveth itself to him, not by doing, but by doing well. Wherein appeareth also the difference between human and divine laws, the one of which two are content with *opus operatum*, the other require *opus operantis*; the one do but claim the deed, the other especially the mind. So that, according to laws which principally respect the heart of men, works of religion, being not religiously performed, cannot morally be perfect. Baptism, as an ecclesiastical work, is for the manner of performance ordered by divers ecclesiastical laws, providing that as the sacrament itself is a gift of no mean worth, so the ministry thereof might, in all circumstances, appear to be a function of no small regard. All that belongeth to the mystical perfection of baptism, outwardly, is the element *the word*, and the serious application of both unto him which receiveth both; whereunto if we add that secret reference which this action hath to life and remission of sins, by virtue of Christ's own compact solemnly made with his Church, to accomplish fully the sacrament of baptism, there is not anything more required.

Now put the question whether baptism administered to infants, without any spiritual calling, be unto them both a true sacrament and an effectual instrument of grace, or else an act of no more account than the ordinary washings are. The sum of all that can be said to defeat such baptism is, that those things which have no being can work nothing, and that baptism, without the power of ordination, is as a judgment without sufficient jurisdiction—void, frustrate, and of no effect. But to this we answer, that the fruit of baptism dependeth only upon the covenant which God hath made—that God by covenant requireth, in the elder sort, faith and baptism—in children, the sacrament of baptism alone, whereunto he hath also given them right by special privilege of birth within the bosom of the holy Church; that infants, therefore, which have received baptism complete, as touching the mystical perfection thereof, are, by virtue of his own covenant and promise, cleansed from all sin; forasmuch as all other laws, concerning that which in baptism is either moral or ecclesiastical, do bind the Church which giveth baptism, and not the infant which receiveth it of the Church: so that if anything be therein amiss, the harm which groweth by violation of holy ordinances must altogether rest where the bonds of such ordinances hold. For that in actions of this nature it fareth not as in jurisdictions, may somewhat appear by the very opinion which men have of them. The nullity of that which a judge doth, by way of authority, without authority, is known to all men, and agreed upon with full consent of the whole world—every man receiveth it as a general edict of nature; whereas the nullity of baptism, in regard of the like defect, is only a few men's new ungrounded, and as yet unapproved, imagination. Which difference of generality in men's persuasion on the one side, and their paucity whose conceit leadeth them the other way, hath risen from a difference easy to observe in the things themselves. The exercise of unauthorized jurisdiction is a grievance unto them that are under it; whereas they that without authority presume to baptize, offer nothing but that which to all men is good and acceptable.

Sacraments are food, and the ministers thereof as parents or as nurses, at whose hands, when there is necessity but no possibility of receiving it, if that which they are not present to do, in right of their office, be of pity and compassion done by others, shall this be thought to turn celestial bread into gravel, or the medicine of souls into poison? Jurisdiction is a yoke which law hath imposed on the necks of men, in such sort, that they must endure it for the good of others, how contrary soever it be to their own particular appetites and inclinations: jurisdiction

bridleth men against their wills—that which a judge doth prevail by virtue of his very power; and, therefore, not without great reason, except the law hath given him authority, whatsoever he doth vanish. Baptism, on the other side, being a favour which it pleaseth God to bestow, a benefit of soul to us that receive it, and a grace which they that deliver are but mere vessels, either appointed by others, or offered of their own accord, to this service—of which two, if they be the one, it is but their own honour, their own offence to be the other—can it possibly stand with equity and right that the faultiness of their presumption in giving baptism should be able to prejudice us, who, by taking baptism, have no way offended? I know there are many sentences found in the books and writings of the ancient Fathers, to prove both ecclesiastical and also moral defects in the minister of baptism a bar to the heavenly benefit thereof; which sentences we always so understand, as Augustine understood, in a case of like nature, the words of Cyprian. When infants baptized were, after their parents' revolt, carried by them in arms to the stews of idols, those wretched creatures, as St. Cyprian thought, were not only their own ruin, but their children's also—their children, whom this their apostasy profaned, did lose what Christian baptism had given them, being newly born. "They lost (saith St. Augustine) the grace of baptism, if we consider to what their parents' impiety did tend, although the mercy of God preserved them, and will also in that dreadful day of account give them favourable audience, pleading, in their own behalf, 'The harm of other men's perfidiousness it lay not in us to avoid.'"

After the same manner, whatsoever we read written, if it sound to the prejudice of baptism through any either moral or ecclesiastical defect therein, we consider it, as equity and reason teacheth, with restraint to the offender only, which doth, as far as concerneth himself and them which wittingly concur with him, make the sacrament of God fruitless. St. Augustine's doubtfulness, whether baptism by a layman may stand, or ought to be re-administered, should not be mentioned by them which presume to define peremptorily of that wherein he was content to profess himself unresolved. Albeit in very truth his opinion is plain enough, but the manner of delivering his judgment being modest, they make of a virtue an imbecility, and impute his calmness of speech to an irresolution of mind. His disputation in that place is against Parmenian, which held, that a bishop or a priest, if they fall into any heresy, doth thereby lose the power which they had before to baptize, and that, therefore, baptism by heretics is merely void. For answer whereof, he first denieth

that heresy can more deprive men of power to baptize others, than it is of force to take from them their own baptism; and, in the second place, he farther addeth, that if heretics did lose the power which before was given them by ordination, and did, therefore, unlawfully usurp as oft as they took upon them to give the sacrament of baptism, it followeth not that baptism, by them administered without authority, is no baptism. For then what should we think of baptism by laymen, to whom authority was never given? "I doubt (saith St. Augustine) whether any man, which carrieth a virtuous and godly mind, will affirm that the baptism which laymen do in case of necessity administer should be iterated. For to do it unnecessarily, is to execute another man's office; necessity urging, to do it is then either no fault at all (much less so grievous a crime that it should deserve to be termed by the name of sacrilege), or, if any, a very pardonable fault. But suppose it even of very purpose usurped and given unto any man by every man that listeth; yet that which is given cannot possibly be denied to have been given, how truly soever we may say it hath not been given lawfully. Unlawful usurpation a penitent affection must redress. If not, the thing that was given shall remain to the hurt and detriment of him which unlawfully either administered or received the same, yet so that in this respect it ought not to be reputed as if it had not at all been given."

Whereby we may plainly perceive that St. Augustine was not himself uncertain what to think, but doubtful whether any well-minded man in the whole world could think otherwise than he did. Their argument, taken from a stolen seal, may return to the place out of which they had it, for it helpeth their cause nothing. That which men give or grant to others, must appear to have proceeded of their own accord. This being manifest, their gifts and grants are thereby made effectual, both to bar themselves from revocation, and to assecure the right they have given. Wherein, for further prevention of mischiefs that otherwise might grow by the malice, treachery, and fraud of men, it is both equal and meet that the strength of men's deeds, and the instruments which declare the same, should strictly depend upon divers solemnities, whereof there cannot be the like reason in things that pass between God and us; because since we need not doubt lest the treasures of his heavenly grace should, without his consent, be passed by forged conveyances, nor lest he should deny at any time his own acts, and seek to revoke what hath been consented unto before—as there is no such fear of danger through deceit and falsehood in this case, so neither hath the circumstance of men's persons that weight in

baptism which for good and just considerations in the custody of seals of office it ought to have. The grace of baptism cometh by donation from God alone. That God hath committed the ministry of baptism unto special men, it is for order's sake in his Church, and not to the end that their authority might give being or add force to the sacrament itself. That infants have right to the sacrament of baptism, we all acknowledge. Charge them we cannot as guileful and wrongful possessors of that whereunto they have right by the manifest will of the donor, and are not parties unto any defect or disorder in the manner of receiving the same. And if any such disorder be, we have sufficiently before declared that, *delictum cum capite semper ambulat*, men's own faults are their own harms. Wherefore, to countervail this and the like mischosen resemblances with that which more truly and plainly agreeth, the ordinance of God concerning their vocation that minister baptism, wherein the ministry of our regeneration is wrought, hath thereunto the same analogy which laws of wedlock have to our first nativity and birth. So that if nature do effect procreation, notwithstanding the wicked violation and breach even of nature's law, made that the entrance of all mankind into this present world might be without blemish, may we not justly presume that grace doth accomplish the other, although there be faultiness in them that transgress the order which our Lord Jesus Christ hath established in his Church? Some light may be borrowed from circumcision for explication of what is true in this question of baptism. Seeing, then, that even they which condemn Zipporah, the wife of Moses, for taking upon her to circumcise her son—a thing necessary at that time for her to do, and as I think very hard to reprove in her, considering how Moses, because himself had not done it sooner, was therefore stricken by the hand of God, neither could in that extremity perform the office; whereupon, for the stay of God's indignation, there was no choice, but the action must needs fall into her hands; whose fact therein, whether we interpret, as some have done, that being a Midianite, and as yet not so thoroughly acquainted with the exercise of Jewish rites, it much discontented her to see herself, through her husband's oversight in a matter of his own religion, brought unto these perplexities and straits, that either she must now endure him perishing before her eyes, or else wound the flesh of her own child, which she could not do but with some indignation, showed, in that she fumingly both threw down the foreskin at his feet, and upbraided him with the cruelty of his religion; or if we better like to follow their more judicious exposition, which are not inclinable to think that Moses was matched like Socrates, nor that circum-

cision could now, in Eleazar, be strange unto her, having had Gershom, her elder son, before circumcised, nor that any occasion of choler could rise from a spectacle of such misery, as doth naturally move compassion and not wrath; nor that Zipporah was so impious, as in the visible presence of God's deserved anger, to storm at the ordinance and law of God; nor that the words of the history itself can enforce any such affection, but do only declare how, after the act performed, she touched the feet of Moses, saying, "Thou art unto me an husband of blood;"* which might be very well, the one done and the other spoken, even out of the flowing abundance of commiseration and love, to signify, with hands laid under his feet, that her tender affection towards him had caused her thus to forget womanhood, to lay all motherly affection aside, and to redeem her husband out of the hands of death with effusion of blood: the sequel thereof, take it which way you will, is a plain argument that God was satisfied with that she did, as may appear by his own testimony, declaring how there followed in the person of Moses present release of his grievous punishment upon her speedy discharge of that duty, which, by him neglected, had offended God, even as, after execution of justice by the hands of princes, the plague was immediately taken away, which former impunity of sin had caused; in which so manifest and plain cases, not to make that a reason of the event which God himself hath set down as a reason, were falsely to accuse whom he doth justify, and without any cause to traduce what we should allow;—yet seeing they which will have it a breach of the law of God for her to circumcise in that necessity, are not able to deny but circumcision, being in that very manner performed, was, to the innocent child which received it, true circumcision, why should that defect, whereby circumcision was so little weakened, be to baptism a deadly wound?

These premises therefore remaining, as hitherto they have been laid, because the commandment of our Saviour Christ, which committeth jointly to public ministers both doctrine and baptism, doth no more, by linking them together, import that the nature of the sacrament dependeth on the minister's authority and power to preach the word, than the force and virtue of the word doth on licence to give the sacrament; and considering that the work of external ministry in baptism is only a pre-eminence in honour, which they take to themselves, and are not thereunto called as Aaron was, do but themselves in their own persons, by means of such usurpation, incur the just blame of

* "Sponsus tu mihi es sanguinum."

disobedience to the law of God ;—farther, also, inasmuch as it standeth with no reason that errors, grounded on a wrong interpretation of other men's deeds, should make frustrate whatsoever is misconceived, and that baptism by women should cease to be baptism, as oft as any man will thereby gather that children which die unbaptized are damned ; which opinion, if the act of baptism administered in such manner did enforce, it might be sufficient cause of disliking the same, but none of defeating or making it altogether void ;—last of all, whereas general and full consent of the godly learned in all ages doth make for validity of baptism, yea, albeit administered in private, and even by women, which kind of baptism, in case of necessity, divers Reformed Churches do both allow and defend—some others which do not defend, tolerate—few, in comparison, and they without any just cause, do utterly disannul and annihilate ;—surely, howsoever, through defect on either side, the sacrament may be without fruit, as well in some cases to him which receiveth, as to him which giveth it, yet no disability of either part can so far make it frustrate and without effect, as to deprive it of the very nature of true baptism, having all things else which the ordinance of Christ requireth. Whereupon we may consequently infer, that the administration of this sacrament by private persons, be it lawful or unlawful, appeareth not as yet to be merely void.

ON SPONSORS AND CONFIRMATION.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM NICHOLS, D.D.

Of Godfathers and Godmothers.

THIS is an impeachment which adversaries bring against the Church, "that in baptism, especially of infants, she requires godfathers and godmothers, and obliges them to answer, in the children's name, to such stipulations as are propounded; very oddly, as they think, for this is to make a jest and sport of the most sacred ordinance of baptism. For what is more ridiculous than to retain, in the baptism of infants, the questions which were anciently put to adult persons, and because they want words and reason to answer for themselves, to make them answer by proxy?" "'Tis grossly impious and profane (they cry) that the sureties of all infants that are brought to the font should be bound to promise religiously, for them, that they shall lead their lives strictly according to the laws of Christ; which is more than can be hoped for from any Christian, much less be promised for them by any considerate man."

Now here, though our adversaries are very fierce and troublesome, as they are in most other cases, yet it is no hard matter to defend this cause, and clear our Church from this odious charge.

Every man that is conversant in the writings of the ancients, knows very well that from the very first ages of Christianity there were always sureties in baptism, who religiously engaged for the faith of the baptized, that they should sincerely believe all that was revealed in the Gospel, and direct the subsequent actions of their lives by the law of Christ: which custom was probably derived from the Jews, who, at circumcision, had always sureties of the covenant. In like manner, when any adult Christian was baptized, he was obliged to promise expressly that he would do all things which the Gospel required of a Christian: at the same time he had sponsors who presented him to the congregation, and engaged for him that he dealt sincerely and honestly, and would never more return to paganism. But when godly parents brought their children to the font, and desired to have them initiated in the Christian faith, this practice was introduced even in the first and best ages, that infants, stipulating by their

sureties and proxies, should enter into covenant with God at baptism, as firmly and legally as if they were at years of discretion. For men of the best sense rightly determined that the infants of Christian parents, whose covenant with God is, according to the apostle, much preferable to that of the Jews, could not be in a worse condition than the Jewish children, who were admitted into the covenant by circumcision on the eighth day. Yet in a worse they must be, if they might not about such an age be made members of our Church. Besides, this suretyship, which was begun in the oldest and best times, hath been continued down to us without scruple or interruption, except the clamours of Anabaptists and Puritans which have been raised against it of late years. And no good reason can be given why, even in our days, the faith and care of some grave persons should not be engaged, that the Church should receive no damage by any one turning infidel after baptism.

For it many times happens that parents, whose great business it is to give their children a religious education, are snatched away by death before the children are grown up; and then the Church expects that their part should be done by godfathers and godmothers. Sometimes parents themselves are too negligent in this particular, setting their children an ill example, or not correcting their faults sharply enough, or holding them to virtue with too slack a rein. In all these cases sureties are the Church's censors to reprove parents' neglect, and see that their children be better taken care of.

"But it is a ridiculous and absurd thing (they say) to put questions to infants who can make no answer." If all the ancient forms of laws were nicely sifted, many harsh and odd things would be found in them which we at this day can scarce be reconciled to, but that there is something in antiquity which makes them venerable. So that we think it a sin to change the wise constitutions of our ancestors, and religiously retain their antiquated words, though something improper, and against the rules of grammar. Now if it be commendable in civil matters to do this, though contrary to the humour of some people, why should the Church be impeached for keeping up a practice, which, as far as we can find, has the authority of the apostolic age on its side? For the oldest ecclesiastical writers speak of questions at baptism, as used, not only in their times, but long before, in the ages next to that of the apostles.

As to the propounding the questions, we do not put them to the infants, but demand of their sureties, in the ancient form, "Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil? Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty? &c. Wilt

thou be baptized in this faith?" Now what words could be conceived fitter to be put to the sureties? What rite can be more pious and pure, and agreeable to primitive institution? Here is nothing strange or new—nothing which is not used almost in every contract. By an old law of the Romans, their *Ædilis* was obliged, within five days after admission to his office, to take an oath to observe the laws. *Valerius Flaccus*, after his election, was hindered from doing this: his brother, as his proxy, was sworn in his stead; and the Commons passed an act that it should be all one as if he had sworn himself. Whenever infant kings are inaugurated, some of the nobility, deputed to represent them, take the usual oaths for them. So do ambassadors for their principals, at the ratifying of any league or articles. The same do guardians for their pupils; and the pupils when grown up are bound by the laws to stand to what was thus transacted for them. Since, then, almost all nations and orders of men act by this method, why should it be charged as a fault upon the Church, that she admits infants into so important a covenant, by sponsors answering for them?

"But they boldly engage for the children that they shall keep God's will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their life." Well, but no more is meant by this, than that the sureties will use their best endeavours that the children may be instructed in true Christian doctrine, calling upon them often to serve and fear God, reproving them for anything that they do amiss, and labouring to reclaim them. The meaning of our Church in this is sufficiently declared in her Liturgy, whereshe thus enjoins sponsors to admonish their children, "That, as they grow up, they frequent sermons, and take care that they learn the Church catechism; and, in the last place, bring them to the bishop to be confirmed by him." And herein our Church is to be highly commended for her wise provision, and singular care of little children: but envy itself can hardly find what to blame her for in all this.

Of Confirmation.

FROM hence our adversaries proceed to arraign our confirmation. They call it "a device of the Papists—a new sacrament invented by them, which we awkwardly imitate: that we use this ceremony as an appendage or patch to baptism, as if Christ had left us an imperfect sacrament, which wanted our hand to give it the finishing stroke." But, before they proceeded to such a heavy censure, they should have considered what they have to

say for our retaining of this rite, and upon how slender a foundation their cavils are built.

In the customs of the ancient Jews, whence Christ and his apostles derived many of theirs, we find something not unlike this our own rite of confirmation. For among them parents brought their children, when they were thirteen years old, before the congregation, where they religiously professed a willing mind to be subject to the law of Moses. Whereupon the congregation prayed for them, that they might prove diligent observers of the law, and be very careful to lead an honest, upright life. And, therefore, I wonder why our adversaries do not charge us with Jewish rather than Romish superstition in this case, since our confirmation differs so little from theirs, that it appears to be plainly grafted on it.

Besides, we have the authority of the apostles on our side for it. For when it was reported to them that the Samaritans had received Christian baptism, two of their order were deputed to go and pray over them, and lay their hands on them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. If it be said that these were extraordinary gifts of the Spirit common in those times, let them tell us how they will make it probable that the power of working miracles was conferred on almost a whole nation : for St. Paul, by a smart question, denies it as a very absurd, incongruous thing : “Do all speak with tongues?” Can we think it becoming the whole body of the apostles that they should send two of their principal men to bestow promiscuously, upon a whole nation, good and bad, the power of working miracles, which yet is no part of Christian religion, nor any way conduces to good living, the main design of our profession? It can hardly be supposed that most of them would employ this gift so much for the establishing of religion, as to make ostentation of what they could do. Yet this is certain, that when St. Paul had laid his hands on twelve men newly baptized, they were filled with the Holy Ghost. And the same apostle speaks of baptism and laying on of hands jointly, as initiating rites, by which all candidates for Christianity were admitted to the profession of it.

Neither has our confirmation the seal of apostolic authority alone, but it is warranted to us by the practice of all following ages. The time would fail me if I should relate all the notable passages of fathers and councils on this head—if I should quote the decrees of the councils of Elvire, Arles, and Laodicea, all held within the four first centuries of Christianity—if I should allege the authority of Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerome, Austin, &c., most ancient writers, who all affirm that this rite was religiously observed in their days: so that they who are

no hearty friends to it do, however, grant it to be as old as Tertullian, and that it accompanied the baptism of those times, though they will not allow it to be a thing entirely distinct from it.

But they are quite mistaken who think Tertullian was the first that mentioned it; for before him Irenæus speaks of it, as what the Valentinians had corrupted. And Theophilus of Antioch, senior to both, takes notice of the chrism used in confirmation.

The primitive Church made confirmation and baptism two distinct things: so St. Cyprian assures us, who calls them two sacraments, in express words. That which made some think that confirmation was much the same thing with baptism was this—that adult persons, who were commonly baptized in those days, being at years of discretion, and able to give an account of their faith, were immediately confirmed as soon as they came out of the water.

We say, likewise, that the power of giving this solemn blessing is lodged in the bishop alone. To this order all antiquity have agreed to ascribe it; even St. Jerome himself, who was no flatterer of bishops. But we can appeal for this to a higher testimony—that of holy Scripture, where we find Philip the evangelist, of no mean figure in the Church, converting the Samaritans, and giving them baptism; but, to keep within the bounds of his office, he reports the success of his preaching to the apostles, who sent two of their own body to confirm these proselytes by imposition of hands. Now if Philip was as much empowered to confirm his converts, as to initiate them by baptism, what occasion was there for two of the apostolic order to be sent from Jerusalem to a foreign people, to do that for them which, according to the principles of our adversaries, Philip, or any other inferior minister, might have done as well?

“But we, as well as the Papists, exalt confirmation to the dignity of a sacrament.” How do the objectors know this? Can they search our hearts and see our thoughts? For the public acts and constitutions of our Church are clearly against the opinion of the Papists in this. And our most ancient and celebrated writers style confirmation, not a sacrament, but a solemn benediction of the bishop.

But what friend to Christian piety can be an enemy to this rite, which is not only ancient and apostolical, but of manifold advantage to the whole Church, and every sound member of it? What could be devised better for the releasing of sureties from their obligation, than the public profession of faith made by children when they come to full age? What can be more for the service of the Church, than that these young soldiers of

Christ, being well trained and disciplined, should be drawn out to fight with their enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil? By this prudent institution one may see how free the service of Christ is; how frankly the Church would have her sons plight their faith to him, and profess their assent to his religion; how she refers it to their own choice whether they will ratify or rescind the vows their sureties made in their name—whether they will live according to the purity of the Gospel, or the vile practices of those who know not Christ. By this rite we give new force to our baptismal covenant made with God, while we not only acknowledge ourselves bound, by the promises of our sureties, to obey the law of Christ, but we ourselves do bind ourselves, in the presence of the bishop, in a most religious and solemn form of words, to direct our lives by the rules of his Gospel. Besides this, the Church hath always held that the Holy Ghost is in a special manner conferred by this sacred benediction; though not to empower men to work miracles, as formerly, yet to enable the confirmed, by his grace, cheerfully and readily to perform all good duties. To say all in a word: whatever is wanting in infant baptism, is supplied by confirmation; and either baptism must be deferred till such time as persons can answer for themselves, or else the stipulations of sureties must be ratified in this or some other way. Which use of confirmation they are forced to confess, who are no great friends to the ceremonies of our Church.

NOTES.

NOTWITHSTANDING the importance which has always been attached to baptism, as the rite of admission to the Christian Church, the performance of this rite has not been made the peculiar office of any minister in the Church. It was, indeed, the special office of John, the forerunner of our Lord, to baptize; he baptized as a messenger preparing the way of the Lord; but when the Messiah had himself entered on his public ministry, John declared that his mission had come to an end. (*a*)

Our Lord received baptism at the hands of John, declaring that it became him thus to fulfil all righteousness. He afterwards appointed the same rite as the mode of admission into the Christian Church; but we are expressly told that he “himself baptized not, but his disciples.” (*b*) A tradition exists, in opposition to this statement, that our Saviour baptized St. Peter, and that Peter having baptized Andrew, James, and John, those disciples administered the holy rite to the others: but this tradition, although admitted by some Roman Catholic writers, rests upon no good foundation. It is recorded in a spurious work, attributed

(*a*) John iii. 30.

(*b*) John iv. 2.

to Clement of Alexandria, (*c*) and is mentioned on the authority of Evodius in Nicephorus. (*d*)—*Riddle's Christian Antiquities*.

But we learn by repeated testimonies that after the second century the bishop was regarded as the regular minister of baptism. In an epistle of Ignatius (*e*) we find it laid down, as a maxim, that it was not lawful either to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper, without the bishop—an expression which implies, at least, the necessity of the bishop's sanction. Tertullian (*f*) says expressly that the right of administering baptism is vested in the bishop, and then, by his permission, in the presbyters and deacons. His words are, "Baptismus dandi habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est episcopus; dehinc presbyteri et diaconi, non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate propter ecclesiæ honorem; quo salvo, salva pax est." He adds, "Alioquin etiam laicis jus est," but advises that this power should be executed with a certain degree of modesty and reserve, and only in cases of necessity. But women could not be permitted to baptize. In the "Apostolical Constitutions" (*g*) the right of administering baptism is denied to readers, singers, and other inferior officers of the Church, and is accorded "only to bishops and presbyters, the deacons assisting them;" bishops and presbyters being in this passage placed on an equality, and the deacons regarded as inferior to the higher order.—*Riddle's Christian Antiquities*.

There can be no doubt that lay baptism was treated as valid by the laws and practice of the early Church; but it is equally certain that this practice was only permitted, as an exception to the general rule, in cases of emergency.

In the commencement of the third century, a controversy arose between the Churches of Rome and Carthage, respecting the validity of baptism by heretics. It was determined that baptism administered in the name of the Holy Trinity, (*h*) by any heretics or schismatics, except some who were expressly named, (*i*) should not be repeated. And this decision was grounded upon the doctrine that the efficacy of the sacrament was not affected by the worthiness or unworthiness of the officiating minister, but proceeded from the supernatural power of the sacrament itself. As a consequence of the establishment of this maxim, women were permitted to baptize in cases of necessity, after the eleventh century. And by a decree of Innocent I. (A.D. 1250) all baptism (in due form), except that of a man's own self, was declared valid.

The celebrated Athanasius, when a boy, having baptized some of his playfellows for their amusement, according to the rites of the Church, the clergy of Alexandria declared this baptism valid and sufficient.—*Riddle's Christian Antiquities*.

At an early period of the Church, certain persons were required to be present at the baptism of its members, who should serve as witnesses of the due performance and reception of the rite, and should also be sureties for the fulfilment of the engagements and promises then made.

These persons were called at first *sponsores*, sponsors. This term

(*c*) Hypotypos., lib. v. (*d*) Hist. Eccl., lib. ii., c. 3. (*e*) Ad Smyrn.
 (*f*) De Bapt., c. 17. (*g*) Lib. iii., c. 11. (*h*) Conc. Arelat., 1, c. 8.
 (*i*) Conc. Nic., c. 8, 19; Conc. Constant., 1, c. 7; Conc. Laodic., c. 7, 8;
 Conc. Trullan., c. 95.

is applied to them by Tertullian ; but it is worthy of remark that he uses the word only with reference to infant baptism, and that he considers it to allude, not only to an answer (*responsum*) given on behalf of the infant who was unable to speak for itself, but also to a promise and obligation, or the undertaking, on behalf of the infant, of a duty as the sponsor's own. But Augustine seems to restrict the allusion to the response or answer.

The more modern terms, *πατέρες, μητέρες*, or *πατέρες, μητέρες, ἐπὶ τοῦ ἁγίου φωτισματος*, *compadres, propadres, commadres, promadres, patrini*, and *matrince*, godfathers and godmothers, are derived from the practice of early times, in which the parents, or, in their absence, the nearest relatives, took the child out of the baptismal water. Perhaps the unclassical and peculiar Latin words, *patrinus* and *matrina*, were chosen, in order to prevent any misunderstanding which might arise from a double acceptance of the common words, *pater* and *mater*, while yet they were so nearly allied to these terms, as to imply a bond of intimate relation, and the existence of mutual obligation. When Latin writers use *pater* in this connexion, they generally add *spiritualis*, or *lustricus*; and in the same way they sometimes call a godson *filius lustricus*. Augustine, in one passage, uses the simple terms *patres* and *fili*; but in such a connexion that no mistake could arise. (*j*)—*Riddle's Christian Antiquities*.

The rite of confirmation, or imposition of hands with prayer, for the full admission of baptized persons into the Church, is observed by nearly all the Churches of Christendom at the present day, in imitation (to say the least) of an apostolical practice recorded in the New Testament.

It appears from the sacred history that the apostles conferred imposition of hands upon persons previously baptized, and no other. Thus when the Samaritans had been converted and baptized by Philip the deacon, the apostles who were at Jerusalem sent unto them Peter and John, "who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them ; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus) ; then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." (*k*)

In Acts xv. 41, we read that St. Paul "went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the Churches." The following remark by Dr. Burton appears to place this transaction in its true light : "The great apostle travelled through Syria and Cilicia ; and the expression used by St. Luke, of his *confirming the Churches* in those countries, proves that he must have planted these Churches at an early period. He now confirmed them, *i.e.*, he gave them such regulations as were necessary for their welfare. Wherever deacons were wanted, he ordained them ; he appointed others to the office of elders ; and there can be little doubt, that to some or all of these ministers he imparted those miraculous gifts of the Spirit, which were so useful for the instruction of the converts, and furnished such convincing evidence of the Gospel." (*l*)—*Riddle's Christian Antiquities*.

(*j*) Serm. 116.

(*k*) Acts viii. 14-17.

(*l*) "Lectures upon the Eccl. Hist. of the first three Centuries," lect. 6.

PREFACE.

THE last points (save the consideration of the “regale and pontificale”) on which the investigator of Church discipline will have to pause, are those which regard rites and ceremonies ; not so much the *right* of the Church to decree them, but the wisdom and meaning of those which she *has* decreed. It will be seen at once that this subject involves that of schism, for they (*i. e.*, the rites and ceremonies in question) must be tried by the rules of Scripture ; and lest it should be thought that we are reasoning in a circle, if we say, first, that the Church is the interpreter of Scripture, and the only authorized interpreter, and next, that her decrees must be tested by Scripture, we will devote a few pages here to considering briefly what we mean when we say that the Church is the only authorized interpreter of Scripture ; and we shall then see that we are no more reasoning in a circle, than we were when we said that we are to test the authority of the Church by the Scriptures, and receive the Scriptures on the authority of the Church. St. Peter, when speaking of the writings of his brother apostle, St. Paul, says, “ They contain things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.”

Now, from this text, we may conclude that St. Peter considered it very dangerous for any man to attempt, by the mere light of nature, to understand and interpret the revelation of God’s mysteries, just as if it were a mere book of human philosophy : nor do stability of purpose and soundness of judgment form a sufficient safeguard, for it seems learning is also required ; and, alas, how frail a safeguard is supplied by learning, may be seen by the ungodly lives of many most learned men, who, nevertheless, well understood at least the theory of Christianity—not to speak of the great but unsanctified attainments of the ancient Arians and modern Socinians. The very existence of such sects proves to us, or should prove to us, that some authorized interpreter is wanting who might mediate between differing opinions, and say, as did our Lord, *with authority*, “ This is the way,

walk ye in it." It is not to be supposed that God would give his people a book, which they might, by want of learning, wrest to their own destruction, and give them no guide to its meaning beyond what their own judgment supplied; while at the same time the very book, the misunderstanding of which was attended with results so dreadful, was one *hard to be understood*. That it is so, is evidenced by the vast number of sects differing *toto cælo* among themselves, yet each claiming for their discordant practices and principles the sanction of God's word. Now if *one* doctrine be there taught, its contrary must, at least by implication, be there condemned; and we have no outlet from the mazes of error, but by taking the clue provided for us by the Church.

We shall not here touch upon the question of private judgment, for that has been done in another place, but shall speak of the Church's duty concerning heresy and schism. Against these two sins do we daily pray: "From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism, good Lord, deliver us;" and with especial wisdom does the Church class with these the chief moving causes thereto—viz., hardness of heart, and contempt of God's word and commandments, and the secular exhibition of the same working—to wit, sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion. This informs us that, in the Church's judgment, heresy and schism arise, like rebellion and sedition, from contempt of God's holy commandments. Men would be gods to themselves, and spurn the laws of their Maker, and his authority in the Church—this produces the former two; they spurn his image in royalty—this produces the latter two. But heresy and schism are different things: the one is a corruption of Christian doctrine; the other a continued violation of Christian discipline. Any deviation from truth, in matters of doctrine, is heresy; hence the heresy may be more or less heinous, as the doctrine involved is one of greater or less *practical* importance. Many of the Millennarians hold heretical opinions; but who would, therefore, class them with Arians and Socinians? There are some who hold that baptism can only be lawfully performed by immersion; these are heretics, but the heresy is of slight moment compared with that of the Anti-pædo Baptists, who deny that sacrament to infants. In short, it is possibly the case, that in every heretic

the amount of error, and consequently of danger, would be found different ; whereas schism is but one thing, and the guilt therefore alike in all cases. Schism is a separation *from*, or, if schismatics like the term better, *in* the visible Catholic Church ; for if a thing be previously one, it matters not whether it be made into two by making a division *in* it, or by making a division *from* it : that which was *one* is now *two*, and schism has been committed. But the difficulty is to decide *by whom* has it been committed ; for it may be committed by a large body against one man, or by one man against a large body, or by any imaginable number of Church members, great or small, against any other imaginable number, great or small, of Church members. It would be possible for a Church to become schismatic by expelling one man from her communion, provided always that she required, as the price of his remaining, something plainly repugnant to God's revealed word.

Let us imagine an example—let us suppose (and happily it requires a great sketch of imagination to imagine such a case) an Apostolical Church to fall into Arianism. If any one person, connected with that Church, entered his protest against that deadly error, and was commanded by the heads of that Apostolical Church (we say apostolical, because apostolically constituted—apostolical order is one thing, evangelical truth another)—if, we say, the *one* orthodox member was commanded to abstain from teaching, or believing, and expressing his belief in “ the Trinity,” he would of course refuse, and if excommunicated, by the very act of his excommunication *the Church would become schismatic* : on the other hand, had he left the Church, the schism would have been chargeable on him. Now such an event as this never did, and we believe never will, happen ; for though many apostolically constituted churches have become grievously corrupted, none have fallen so low as this ; nor do we imagine it in any degree probable that EVANGELICAL TRUTH and APOSTOLICAL ORDER *can be so far sundered*.

At the time of the Anglican Reformation, the great Western Church, of which Rome was the head, would have continued to acknowledge the Anglican branch, had that branch consented to the Pope's supremacy, and those doctrines which were even then beginning to be cast out. The Anglican Church refused,

because the things required of her were plainly contrary to God's word, as interpreted by the *primitive* Church. Hence, when the Roman Church ceased to communicate with her, though there was undoubtedly a schism, yet the guilt of that schism remained with Rome, and not with England.

Thus, then, it appears that the sin of schism rests not necessarily with the minority, nor with the excluded party; but it may be incurred by a majority, and even by a Church. But if schism be thus defined, it is plain that *every* separation is not schism, and much delicacy is required in dealing with it when it is clearly indicated. We have already seen that the Church has no right to inflict any temporal punishments for spiritual offences. Spiritual punishment, in this instance, is equally out of the question; for the offender has, by his own act, separated himself from the visible Church of Christ, and thus inflicted on himself the greatest of spiritual punishments—viz., excommunication. It is true, that, to a person in his state of mind, this may seem no punishment at all; or, as is more usually the case, he may flatter himself that he has not incurred it; but as he has, in the eyes of every Churchman, really done so, the only point which remains to be discussed is the manner in which such a person is to be treated. It is probable that arguments will be of no avail; temporal penalties would be useless, even if they were lawful; and the spiritual penalty is suffered in ignorance. Should he return, the primitive Church would have required public penance; but, in these days of laxity, it is evident that the strong arm of legal interference prevents the discipline of the Church from being fully carried out; and the minister who should reject a parishioner from the altar, for no other cause than that he had been guilty of schism, would soon acquire an unenviable notoriety in courts of law.

We must look upon the present relative position of Church and State as, in many respects, an exceedingly anomalous one, and the sooner the points of difference can be adjusted, the better for both parties. In cases of heresy, the course open to the minister of the Catholic Church is the same; and little can, therefore, be done, in these days of degeneracy, but to excite, by every means, a love of the Church—a due idea of her authority—a proper valuing of her ordinances—right notions concerning

the sacraments—some knowledge, at least, of the apostolical succession—of the *nature of excommunication*—of the commission of the priesthood—and of the character of heresy and schism. The duty of the priest, if unfettered by his duties to the State, would be to reject both the heretic and the schismatic, should they approach the altar; and the duty of the laity, to consider such (if obstinate) as heathen men and publicans.

Since, then, it is the duty of the Church thus to treat both heresy and schism—and since she necessarily adapts her services to a *high*, not a low, state of religion—it follows, by the same necessity, that they are unfitted for a lax and indifferent condition, both as respects doctrine or discipline. Each person, who is received by baptism into her visible communion, is said, in the primitive, and not the puritan, sense of the word, to be *regenerate*, or born again; every person who, from among her communicants, departs this life, is said to be committed to the ground in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life; but if from this necessary mark of a true Church—viz., the adapting her services to a high standard of religious attainment—we turn to the real standard which prevails among her members, we shall be struck with the deplorable contrast. We grant that there is, indeed, far more religion within her pale, than among the “*denominations* ;” but we lack that high tone of devotion, that pure fervour, which characterizes her Liturgy.

Then again the state of society has become such, that excommunication is practically a mere name, and nineteen twentieths of our vast population are virtually self-excommunicated. Yet, because the Church is a National Church, the *State compels her* to perform her holiest offices over the unholiest characters; and hence there is an anomaly which every one who passes may perceive. The sectarian rejoices and exults at what he calls, and perhaps thinks, the unscripturalness of the Church, forgetting that what excites his anger is equally offensive to her, and that the service against which he objects is performed, solely because to refuse would bring down, on the non-officiating clergyman, State penalties. Such laws ought to be repealed, or the canons should be altered, or some changes effected in the Liturgy. Now were the Liturgy changed, it must be a change suiting it to a *low* condition of public religion:

this would be manifestly wrong, for the Church should raise the tone of religion in the world to *her* standard—not allow the world to pull down that in the Church to its own. The alteration in the canon law (though here some changes might be beneficially introduced) would have ultimately the same tendency; and therefore the only mode in which the mischief could be remedied, would be either to repeal the laws of the State which are contrary to those of the Church, or to obtain from Convocation a new set of services, *in addition* to those now used, and adapted solely for non-communicants. Many plans have been proposed by which the evil of the present system might be obviated, but they all involve still greater ones of their own. Our object, however, here is not to suggest new plans, or explain old ones; but simply to state the present condition of Church discipline.

We have now briefly touched upon the chief topics of Church discipline; we have traced each from the apostolic times, and have shown its reasonableness, not merely by antiquity, but by “the fitness of things.” Some singular anomalies are presented to us by the operations of modern law—anomalies which, however, furnish us with one motive for exultation. It is plain that so high a value is set on the ordinances of the Church, in this country, that men will rather snatch them by the force of civil law, than bear the privation of them. As, however, it is not every Church ordinance that works “*ex opere operato*,” they may sometimes obtain only the shadow of that after which they grasp; still the sign is cheering, and we may hope that it points to the time when more lawful means shall be adopted. In the mean time, it becomes every minister of Christ’s one Catholic and Apostolic Church to wait with calm and humble confidence for the revealing of the divine strength—for “upon that Rock,” even Christ, hath he built “his Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

C.

SALVATION ONLY IN THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

BY HENRY DODWELL, M.A.,

CAMDEN'S PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT OXFORD.

THE ordinary means of assuring us of the Divine pleasure either concerning his supernatural assistances, or concerning his indulgences to our ordinary failings, or of his rewarding our weak and imperfect performances with supernatural felicities, being all of them things depending on his arbitrary pleasure, can be no other than promises and a covenant solemnly confirmed to us. That they are things perfectly at his arbitrary disposal, plainly appears from the fact that he is not necessitated to them by any obligation of his naturally beneficent nature, nor by any relation by which he is necessarily related to us as our Creator and Governor, which might further endear him to us. And as for any further relation to which he is not so naturally determined, the very favour of entering into such an one is as arbitrary as anything else that depends on his free disposal, and therefore cannot prejudge against the freedom of all the favours consequent to it. Now in arbitrary things wherein God is, as to any obligation of his nature, indifferent which way he determines himself, it is impossible to know which way he will be pleased actually to determine himself without actual and express revelation. And because the actual performance of these things must be future as well as present, not only as to the reward, but as to the assistances also, without which we could have little security of the possibility of our duty, or consequently of the comfortableness of our condition—we can, upon these terms, enjoy no solid comfort, unless we may be assured, not only that it is his will at present, but that it shall be also for the future; which actual revelation of his will, for the future performance of good things to us, is that which is properly called a promise. But it is certain that God does not multiply these promises according to the multiplicity of the cases of the persons concerned in them: and therefore, the promises being only general, the only way how particular persons can assure themselves of their interest in them, can only be by their interest in that body and community to whom they are made.

And because this community does not consist of a particular

number of persons existing in one age, but is designed to comprehend the generality of mankind in a perpetual succession, and yet God is not pleased ordinarily to presentiate himself through the several periods of those successions in dealing with the several persons for whom he has designed those favours; and because that it is impossible that any covenant can be made, on God's part, without a declaration of his consent to the promises on performance of conditions on our part, especially in matters of that nature of which we are at present discoursing—that is, in the dispensation of ordinary favours, to which he is not obliged by his essential goodness: therefore it will be necessary that this covenant be made in general, but that the admission of particular persons to it be transacted the same way which is always thought reasonable in contracts of the same nature where the party covenanting does not personally appear, by delegating and empowering sufficient proxies who may seal it in his name, and by whose act he may, therefore, declare himself obliged. These things are certainly so essential to the notion of a covenant, properly so called, as that that consent which may in some cases be presumed without them, yet cannot for any of these defects deserve the proper name of a covenant, or infer that legal obligation which is the advantage of a covenant above other contracts which are not transacted with the like solemnity in order to our comfort. And therefore as this conveyance of a right to promises by a general covenant is the only ordinary way whereby we may be assured of a title to them, so the application of this covenant by these solemnities is the only ordinary means whereby we may be particularly assured of our interest in the covenant. But that I may more distinctly show, not only that in reason this is fit to have been thus contrived, but also that it has been actually observed in the evangelical covenant, and that I may bring the application more home to our particular case, I, therefore, proceed to the second particular proposed: that, at least, these ordinary means of our salvation (at least, those whereby we may be satisfied of it, and receive any comfort from it—that is, as has appeared from the things now premised, God's promises, as conveyed to us by a covenant, and this covenant as legally applied to particular persons, by persons sufficiently authorized by God for that purpose, to act in his name, and to engage him with a legal valid obligation to performance) are, indeed, confined to the external communion of the visible Church; and that the Episcopal Church, under whose jurisdiction any one lives, is that visible Church, out of which these ordinary means of salvation are not to be had by any whilst he lives under that jurisdiction. This

consists of two parts : first, that these ordinary means of salvation are confined to the external communion of the visible Church ; and, secondly, that in reference to the duty of particular persons, that visible Church wherein they may expect to find these ordinary means is the Episcopal, in opposition to all other societies not episcopally governed.

These ordinary means of salvation are confined to the external communion of the visible Church. I say the external communion, that I may prevent those exceptions which many are ready to make in behalf of our dissenting brethren—that they do already communicate with us in thirty-six of the thirty-nine Articles, which they believe as well as we ; and that they heartily wish well to all good men, of what party soever ; and that, at least, they pray for us, where they cannot pray with us. For these, if they could, in any propriety of speech, be styled acts of communion—which no good Christian can deny, even to real schismatics themselves, with whom, notwithstanding, all, who hold that there is such a thing as real schism, must not hold it lawful to communicate—yet most certainly they are not acts of external communion. By this, therefore, I only mean a participation in those external exercises whereby the Church subsists as a distinct society—that is, a joining in the ordinances administered in it, but especially in the sacraments. I say the visible Church, purposely to obviate that pretence of the Church's consisting only of the elect, who, as they are supposed themselves not visible, nor united among themselves by any visible commerce, so they think—and very consequently to this notion—that communion may be maintained with them in an invisible way, by likeness of design, and sympathy of affection. And therefore, by this visible Church, I mean that visible society which is maintained by an acknowledgment of the same common visible ecclesiastical government, and by an external participation of the same common sacraments. So that my meaning in this whole proposition is, that a legal right to these evangelical promises and covenant, which are the ordinary means whereby we may be assured of our salvation on performance of conditions, is not conveyed to us otherwise than by our participation of these external ordinances, whereby we profess ourselves members of such a visible society, which is maintained by those ordinances, of which none can be partakers without consent of the visible ecclesiastical governors, which must, therefore, oblige all to a subjection to those governors. This will be clear in discoursing concerning these particulars—first, that the only ordinary means whereby we may assure ourselves that we in particular have an interest in his promises of any of the things

now mentioned as necessary for our salvation, is by our assurance of our being engaged in covenant with him; secondly, that the only ordinary means whereby we may assure ourselves of our interest in this covenant with him, is by our partaking of these external solemnities whereby this covenant is transacted and maintained; and, thirdly, that the partaking of these external solemnities with any legal validity—which can only be a ground of comfort to a person concerned in this case—is only to be had in the external communion of the visible Church.

1. Therefore, the only ordinary means whereby we may assure ourselves that we in particular have any interest in these divine promises—without which assurance it has appeared to be in vain for particular persons to challenge any comfort—is by assuring ourselves that we in particular are in covenant with him; so that, at least the negative way of arguing (for which alone I am at present concerned) will hold here, that he, who cannot assure himself that he is in covenant with God, can also never—in an ordinary way, at least—assure himself that he in particular has an interest in the divine promises. For, proving this, I desire it may be observed, first, that it is only the obligatory force either of the divine promise or covenant that can be a solid ground—I do not say of comfort in general, but, at least, of any positive assurance, and consequently, at least, of that degree of comfort which requires positive assurance. This appears from what has been already discoursed under the former head. Secondly, therefore, it is to be observed further, that promises and covenants are legal transactions, and that God himself herein condescends to the capacities of his creatures, so that they may be capable of judging him bound to them by the same legal rational measures whereby they are capable of entering into obligations to one another. That it was God's design that his creatures should understand him as thus obliged, is very easy to be understood from his using expressions plainly significative of a legal conveyance, with all its circumstances, according to the customs of those nations. Thus the name of a covenant, of a mediator, of a testament, of a surety, of sealing, of giving an earnest and first-fruits, &c., are plain terms of law, and allusions to the customs of legal conveyances in those times, and therefore were so most obviously intelligible by those persons—who were concerned in them immediately, and to whose capacities they were immediately fitted—of a legal obligation, and consequently were in all likelihood designed by God himself so to signify: unless we can suppose that he designedly made use of expressions, which, by all regular and prudent measures of interpretation, were likely to be misunderstood by his

creatures concerned in them, which is not reconcilable with his goodness and veracity. Besides, this appears from his doing this in writings of a popular style, and particularly fitted to the vulgar capacities, who were certainly like to understand him thus where they found their own familiar expressions used, and their terms alluded to; nay, from the many instances in the Epistle to the Hebrews especially, where that divine author himself has given us precedents of arguing from the received legal notions concerning the nature of contracts—that “testaments are not of force till the death of the testator,” that “covenants must be confirmed with blood,” &c.—which had been extremely improper if he had not supposed, in general, that God’s covenant with mankind in the Gospel was of the same nature with other legal contracts.

For it is to be remembered, that in these discourses he is not so much to be considered in the quality of a revealer of God’s will, as of a disputant; and, therefore, as arguing from premises, not only granted by the persons with whom he had to deal, but also true in themselves, and secure in their consequences. For it is not probable that he would have laid the main stress of so considerable a part of his discourse only on arguments *ad homines*. And seeing that, in this way of arguing, the reason which he supposes sufficient to assure his readers of the truth of the premises of such discourses could not be any authority of his own—(for if the premises must have been believed for his authority, why might not the same authority suffice for rendering the conclusions also credible which were to be deduced from them? And if so, what need had there been of any argument or deductions?)—he must, therefore, plainly suppose that God’s dealing with them was really by way of a legal contract, and that all maxims requisite to the nature of such contracts, according to the concurrent sense of such persons as in that age were most prudently to be presumed to be best acquainted with the nature of such contracts, were also applicable to these divine contracts; and that arguments grounded on such maxims were solid and conclusive. For these were the only proper reasons for assuring such persons of their truth, antecedently and independently on the apostle’s authority; and, therefore, by the same tenor of arguing, all those other propositions to which they were equally applicable must be presumed equally true.

2. Therefore it hence follows, that the nature of the obligation of these divine promises and covenant is to be explained in a legal way; and that not only by the laws of nature and nations in general, but also, in many instances, by those then

prevailing amongst the Hellenistical Jews—for whose use the New Testament seems to have been primarily designed—those of the Roman empire in general, and those of their particular nation. But especially the securest arguing in this kind will be from the laws of nature and nations, and the general rational notions concerning the obligation of this sort of contracts, not only such as are really agreeable to the nature of the things themselves, but also such as were conceived to be rational and agreeable to the natures of the things by the unanimous consent of civilized nations, and of the masters of reasoning whose authority was then had in general veneration. For though God be not any farther than he pleases himself obliged by particular positive constitutions, because he is not subject to the authority by which they are established; yet by virtue of the essential rectitude of his will, whereby it is necessarily conformed to the rule of right reason, we cannot conceive anything necessarily obliging in point of reason, and yet conceive him indifferent to its observation. And, therefore, whatever—I do not say is, but is by us conceived to be, rationally obligatory in the nature of these contracts, that we may presume to be obligatory even to God himself, when he is pleased to enter into such contracts with us. For the very design of all contracts being to give mutual security for performance on both sides, it is very rational that we be the same way assured of performance on God's part, as we give security for performance on ours. But this cannot be, unless the same reason of obligation be supposed equally cogent in both cases. Now it is plain that our own obligations are measured by our own notions; and, therefore, unless we may judge of God's obligations by the same measures, we may conceive ourselves to give security where none is given us, which is not agreeable with that simplicity and fair dealing which we must needs conceive inseparable from divine contracts.

I say, not only is, but is conceived, both because our conceptions, as erroneous as they are in themselves, are yet the only possible measures of our comfort, and because I have already shown that it is not rational to believe that God will suffer the generality of those, to whom his revelations were at first proposed, to be led into any actual error by following their own conceptions in such cases; and because I might, by this clause, give a reason of the latter part of my assertion, that not only in general propositions concerning the nature of the obligation of these contracts, but also in such as were reputed for such by the greatest masters of reasoning in that age, such an assurance, as I am speaking of, may be securely grounded. Because the sense of these wise men was most likely, and in prudence most

fit, to have been followed by the generality of those ages, and therefore must not have been supposed likely to have been permitted by Providence to misguide them. This I do the rather observe because they are these general rules and eternal reasons, concerning the obligation of these contracts, for which I am at present solicitous, and on which I do intend to superstruct my future discourse.

3. Therefore these promises of forgiveness of our past sins, and assistance in our future performances, and acceptance of our imperfect righteousness as if it had been perfect, and passing by our daily frailties, and accepting of our weak performances in order to a supernatural reward, are to be considered as the things to be performed on God's part of the evangelical covenant. This appears from the expressions of the covenant itself, as they are transcribed from Jer. xxxi. 31-34, by the author to the Hebrews (Heb. viii. 8-12), where, on God's part of this covenant, it is promised, that he "will put his laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts"—by which terms are implied all his gracious assistances of them for the performance of their duty—and that he "will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and that their sins and iniquities he will remember no more;" by which may be included his whole indulgence to their sins, not only his perfect forgiveness of their sins past, implied in his remembering them no more, but also his bearing with their future frailties, which may appositely enough be intimated by his being merciful to their unrighteousness—as unrighteousness may signify, not that which is contrary to righteousness, but that which falls short of it in point of perfection; and as being merciful may imply a weakness and imperfection in the persons to whom it is shown, which might be a rational inducement to the generous nature of God to incline him to mercy. Though I confess, when I consider the frequent use of these terms otherwise in the sacred writers, and especially that frequent practice among them of making the latter part of a verse exegetical of the former, I cannot undertake that this critical distinction must necessarily have been designed by the prophet himself. Yet, on the other side, considering how many things this author to the Hebrews himself infers from the Old Testament, from the native signification of the terms whereby they are expressed, as designed by the Holy Ghost, how little soever thought of by the sacred writers themselves, this exposition cannot barely, on that account, be necessarily concluded irrational, whilst it appears congruous to the strict signification of the terms themselves. But, however, though this exposition should fail, on account of the critical importance of those terms, yet it may be included,

even in the latter expressions themselves, if by the sins and iniquities, which he promises to remember no more, be not only signified those misdemeanors whereby they had forfeited their interest in the first covenant, and made themselves unworthy of the second, in which regard they are said “not to have continued in his covenant” (that is, in the former covenant) and, therefore, “not to have been regarded by God”—which must, therefore, only imply such sins as are antecedent either to the constitution of the new covenant, or at least to their initiation into it (as I verily believe that these alone are primarily and originally intended)—but also the frailties consequent to their initiation into the evangelical covenant: which are also capable of being remembered—not, indeed, in order to the establishment of the new covenant, or their admission into it, which must here be supposed antecedent to it; but in regard of the accomplishment of the evangelical promises to them, several of which are supposed future to them whilst they live in this world.

But whether the remission of sins of frailty consequent to the covenant be implied in these words or not, yet most certainly it is in the covenant itself; unless we suppose this new covenant less merciful than the old, under which there was admitted an ordinary way of expiating sins of this nature; and, besides, it might have been proved from several other texts of the New Testament, if it had been necessary. That which I desire only to remark further at present from this text is, that it is expressly mentioned, as one of the effects of this new covenant, that “God would be unto them a God, and they should be unto him a people.” Whence it will be easy to infer, that God’s promises only belong to them as in covenant with him, because it is only by that covenant that they become his people. For I believe our dissenting brethren themselves will not think that these promises were ever designed by God for any but his own people, even in this restrained sense, whereby they are made his people by virtue of this covenant with him, and to others that yet are not so only on condition of their becoming so: and if they had doubted of it, it had been easy to have proved it. Thus Christ does not so much as “pray for the world, but only for them whom his Father had given him out of the world;” in the same sense wherein Judas himself had been given him; which could not be understood of a giving successful in the event, but only of a giving of external initiation into his covenant—which is the very sense for which I am at present concerned. And it is only to as many as are thus given him by the Father that he has power given him of the Father to give eternal life, and to raise them up at the last day; as both eternal life and the resur-

rection are usually understood in the sense only for a state of happiness. And they are only they who thus come unto him (*ἐρχόμενοι πρὸς*, a word signifying proselytism and the external rites of initiation, then requisite for that purpose, as it was then practised among the Jews) that he will in no way cast out. And to this purpose those texts might have been urged which are produced for proving Christ's dying primarily for the Church. And the answers to them will be anticipated in the sequel of this discourse, whence it will appear both that faith and repentance themselves, on which they so much insist, are not available to salvation—at least, not pleadable in a legal way—without our being of the Church; and that the Church of which we are obliged to be, is an external body politic.

But at present, for proving that God's promises are indeed only his part of the covenant, what can be more clear than that on this account the Jews are said, under the Old Testament, to have had a particular interest in God's promises? So St. Peter tells them that the promise was to them and to their children, and to all that were afar off (that is, with this limitation), even to as many as the Lord our God should call (that is, to as many of the Gentiles as should be admitted into their external society by proselytism). For by the phrase *afar off* the Gentiles are usually signified. And it is not credible that he could here have taken it for granted that the Gentiles were salvable on the bare moral conditions of faith and repentance, without external proselytism; for he seems here to argue from the concessions of his auditors, concerning whom it is notorious that they never believed the Gentiles salvable on such easy terms: and St. Peter himself was not as yet convinced of the salvability of the Gentiles on other terms than proselytism to the Jewish worship, till his vision upon occasion of the story of Cornelius; and when he was, we yet find him difficult in believing of it, as appears from his separating from them as impure upon occasion of the brethren that came from Jerusalem, fourteen years after St. Paul's conversion, which was long after—a sign that even then he had not the confidence to urge it as an argument to the Jews, as it is plain what is here insisted on is urged by way of argument. Nor is the promise here mentioned that of the Messiah being of their nation, or of their numerousness (of which the Gentiles, though proselyted, were still incapable), nor indeed any of those temporal ones which particularly concerned them, as even their civil affairs were governed by a theocracy; but spiritual ones, of remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, as appears from the verse immediately preceding. And certainly these, if any, concerned them

more immediately, as a Church, and may therefore, by exact parity of reason, be expected to be confined to the Christian Church now, who have succeeded them in that capacity.

Besides, it seems exceeding clear, from the whole current of the apostle's discourse upon this subject, that the Gospel has only thrown down that partition wall (as the apostle calls it) whereby the Jews, as a particular nation, had been discriminated from the rest of mankind; so that the same privileges, which had been appropriated then, must, by the tenor of this reasoning, be understood to be made common law: yet so as that this enlargement of the Gospel is not so to be understood as if every individual person of other nations might immediately challenge these privileges, by virtue of the evangelical covenant, upon performance of the moral conditions, but that now all are capable of being admitted into the covenant itself; which will consequently entitle them to those privileges, without being obliged to leave their national customs, or to incorporate themselves into a particular nation, as they were then conceived obliged to incorporate themselves into the nation of the Jews, in order to the gaining a complete title to all those spiritual privileges. This, as it fully satisfies the design of the apostle's discourse, so it still supposes a like confinement of the promises to the evangelical covenant as had been to the legal, the only difference being, that all are capable of being admitted to the covenant now, who had not been so formerly. Thus again the apostle St. Paul tells us that theirs were "the adoption, and the glory (the Shechinah), and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the services of God, and the promises." And besides this mention of the adoption, which was clearly a spiritual benefit, as also that of the Shechinah was, if by it we understand, not that glory which appeared on Mount Sinai at the giving of the law, nor that which appeared in the cloud and pillar of fire during their journey through the wilderness, nor that which overshadowed the mercy-seat under the first temple, but failed under the second; but that which, according to the notions of the rabbins, is supposed to rest on every Israelite, on account of his being so; which seems to be the same with that which is called the Holy Spirit in the language of Christians. I say, besides these, it also appears further that the other benefits, implied in the general name of promises, were not only their temporal privileges, by the general design of the apostle in that whole epistle, where he frequently mentions remission of sins and justification as part of those privileges which were controverted betwixt them and the Gentiles. Now if the promises had been indefinite to all upon the bare

performance of the moral duties of repentance, and even of faith in the Jewish religion, as far as it could appear credible to other nations—that is, indeed, as far as it could be obligatory to them—I do not understand what special interest the Jews could have had in them. For whosoever reads their story, and considers the dull and sensual humour of the generality of that nation, cannot believe them more inclinable to faith and repentance than the generality of other civilized nations; so that they were not likely, by bare performance of the conditions, to gain any advantage of the Gentiles in the event, if the promises had been equally designed for them and others. It must, therefore, have been from a designed limitation of the promises themselves that they, and not others, otherwise than by becoming of their community by proselytism, should have a singular interest in these promises, especially if we compare them with those Gentiles who lived among them (and it was with them that the apostle compared them), to whom the divine revelations, as to the directive part of them, might have been as notorious as to themselves. And the most rational way conceivable of confining them, and which seems to have been alluded to in the apostle's discourses on this subject, is this, that the promises were God's part of the covenant, to which the Jews were admitted, as the Gentiles were excluded from it.

Now, though the condition of the Jews was indeed singular in this, that it was confined to one nation, so that no other nations were admitted to it, and even no particular persons of other nations were capable of being admitted to that favour without an incorporation into that particular nation by the complete proselytism of justice, whereby they become obnoxious to the judicial law which concerned them as a commonwealth, as well as to the moral and ceremonial which concerned them as they were a Church; and upon that account it is that the apostles teach us that in the new evangelical covenant God is no respecter of persons; that “in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him;” and that “now the partition wall is broken down” by Christ; that “he has abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace,” so that “there is (now) no difference between Jew and Greek,” but “they are all one in Jesus Christ; and now neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision:” yet all these discourses seem only to aim at this, that all sorts of nations may now be admitted to the evangelical covenant by baptism, without remitting any of their national or political distinctives in compliance to any one, which

was not allowed them under the Mosaic discipline. But this liberty cannot be urged from any design of the sacred writers in these discourses, so far as to excuse them from the external rites of initiation into the new covenant, as if their fearing God and working righteousness, or the faith working by love, or any other moral dispositions whatsoever, should prove available to them in order to the procuring supernatural rewards, without an interest in the Gospel covenant; or that they alone should, in an ordinary way, procure an interest in the Gospel covenant without an external admission into it in a solemn way, where this admission might be obtained on any tolerable un sinful terms, as our adversaries conceive. But rather, seeing the same legal way of correspondence between God and us is continued in the way of a covenant; and seeing the Church, with whom this covenant is made, is still a body politic, as formerly, though not a civil one; and seeing that God has designed to oblige all persons to enter into this society, and to maintain its peace (which could not be significant if persons might ordinarily hope for the same advantages out of it as in it), they will both of them seem to agree in this, that the promises are in both alike confined to the covenant, at least, as to an ordinary way.

But, besides these arguments from testimonies, this confinement of the evangelical promises to the evangelical covenant will appear from the reason of the things themselves, even according to that account of them which our dissenting brethren themselves conceive to be rational. To which purpose it is to be remembered that the reason why God has been pleased to admit mankind to this favour is not his own essential goodness alone, but the consideration of the satisfaction of Christ, by which it is purchased, and by which it is made reconcilable with the principles of government to admit of this impunity of our offences without any fear of inconvenience that must otherwise follow from such an example of impunity and favour to persons so offending. Whence it will further follow that, seeing they are the purchase of Christ's blood, they are to be considered as belonging to his right, and therefore as disposable only according to his pleasure. Now they themselves acknowledge a covenant betwixt God the Father and Christ concerning this purchase, not only that the promises were to become his property, but also that their actual distribution and extent should be according to his appointment. However, whether the distribution of them depended on his pleasure or not, yet, as to the positive way of arguing, we who have an interest in Christ are sufficiently secure of obtaining them; because, by virtue of this satisfaction, his Father himself, as himself has told us, loves us, and is as careful for

the performance as if himself had been the person interested in our behalf. And accordingly he has given our Saviour this power for this purpose, "that he should give eternal life to us;" and he has "received a commandment from the Father to lay down his life for us." And the very persons are as truly given him by the Father, as the Father himself has confined these favours only to the persons which he should give him. And if our dissenting brethren would only be pleased to consider further, that the covenant betwixt Christ and us is only pursuant to that betwixt him and his Father, and only designed for its application to particulars, that as by the covenant betwixt him and his Father it is resolved that only his should have an interest in these promises, so by the covenant betwixt him and mankind particular rules were agreed upon for knowing who should be accounted his; and that Christ transacted this whole affair as a public person, the same way as Adam had done in the former covenant; and that, accordingly, as the benefit of the former covenant belonged to all who bore the image of the first Adam, so the benefit of the latter covenant cannot be challenged by any but those who bear the image of the second; nay, that the name of Christ is more expressly applied to the multitude represented by him, than that of Adam is to the multitude represented by Adam: that only Adam and his wife are called Adam, but all who have an interest in the new covenant are called by the name of Christ; that only Eve was said to be flesh of Adam's flesh, and bone of his bone, and one flesh with him, in regard of the singular manner of her production out of him, but the whole Church is said to be of the flesh and bones of Christ; nay, that this unity betwixt Christ and his Church is expressly urged, so far as that whatsoever is done to the Church is, in a legal sense, reputed as if it had been done to Christ himself, and what is not conferred on his members, is said to be wanting to himself, their head (so he was persecuted by St. Paul in his members, and "the remainder of his sufferings in the flesh was fulfilled" by the sufferings of the same St. Paul, when now a Christian, and he "bore in his body the dyings of the Lord Jesus;" and from this relation of ours to Christ, as of members to our head, the same apostle concludes it as impossible for him to have risen if we should not rise also, as it is for the head to be enlivened whilst at the same time its members lie rotting in the grave; where I desire it may be observed that the apostle is to be considered as a disputant from reason, not as a proposer of revelation); whence it will plainly follow that Christians are also included in this legal person of Christ, which is sustained by him in transacting the new covenant; and, therefore, that as all

Christians must necessarily have a title to these promises (which cannot otherwise be said to be performed to Christ in this latitude), so that none but they can have a legal title to them, because none can have a legal title to them but by purchase, and none but Christ has purchased them, and none but they have a legal title to the name, and consequently to the purchases of Christ;—if, I say, these things had been impartially considered, I do not conceive what could have been further necessary for showing that this legal title to these promises is confined, not only to the covenant betwixt God and Christ, but also to that betwixt Christ and mankind.

Nor, indeed, can I conceive how the notion of a covenant is otherwise explicable in these evangelical transactions. For, considering that that does imply not only a legal, but a mutual, contract, it must follow that there must be mutual promises, and mutual obligations; and, therefore, that as God is pleased, in this covenant, to oblige us, in a legal way, to the performance of our duty, so we may expect that he would also be pleased to oblige himself, by promising some advantages to us, to encourage us in it. If he had in another way exacted our duty, on the bare account of his absolute authority over us, without any promises on his part, it might indeed have been called a command, but could never have been properly styled a covenant. And if God obliged himself to any promises in this covenant with us, it is least of all credible that he should leave out those promises which are of all others the most considerable, as these are of which we are here discoursing. Besides that, indeed, the very nature of a promise inferring a legal obligation, it is not likely that God would so far condescend as to make them, but upon the like legal security of duty to be performed by his creatures, which, when it is mutual on both parties, we call a covenant. And these promises of duty, confirmed in a solemn way by a covenant on our part, being the only rational inducement likely to prevail with God to make these promises, it is not credible that he would design those favours for any but such as give him this solemn security which may induce him to it. For even this external solemnity is very considerable, in regard of the influence it may have on the obligation and security of a covenant, especially as transacted with a multitude, how little soever it may seem to be so, in regard of the rational obligation of the mutual consent of the interested parties. Nor is it only thus rational in itself that God should thus confine his promises to his covenant; but it appears to have been his actual design in the contrivance of it, as I shall have occasion to show more fully in my future discourse.

I am aware some of our Calvinist brethren may be tempted to think this discourse, for proving the confinement of the promises to such as have an interest in the new covenant purchased by Christ, to be both needless as to themselves, and to be disagreeable to our own principles in the remonstrant controversies : to be needless as to them, because they are for a greater confinement than we can approve of, so as not only to confine them in the event, but also as to the original design ; so that, as to others, they conceive neither the promises to have been designed for them, on performance of conditions, nor yet that grace which might have enabled them for that performance : to be disagreeable to our own principles, when we prove both the will of God and the death of Christ to have been designed for the salvation of all. I confess, if we understood the Church in the same sense as our brethren ordinarily do when they produce these same texts for their own purpose in the remonstrant controversies, only for the secret number of God's elect, and that by the death of Christ not being designed for them, as scattered individuals, we meant, not only that his death should not be available for them as scattered individuals, that is, whilst they continued so scattered, but also that it should not as much as purchase that actual grace for them, even in that condition, which might put it in their power to be incorporated into the Church—there had been some ground for this mistake. But these senses are far from being ours ; nor is it, indeed, our interest that we should own them : for they would fail us when we should have occasion to use them, that is, when we should undertake to show that they are not in the Church, and their danger in continuing so. Nor is it less disserviceable to our design to suppose that persons out of the communion of the Church are so deprived of the promises by their being so as to want that degree of grace which is absolutely necessary for making their return to it possible. If that were their case, to what purpose should we endeavour either to convince them of the dangerousness of their present condition, or persuade them to come out of it ? To talk to people of doing that which we already know they cannot do, is not to persuade, but to upbraid them. And it were not good will to them, but inhumanity, as much as to discover to them that danger which we knew it were impossible for them to escape. It would but add to them the trouble of their present fears, over and above the future mischief of it when it should befall them.

Our plain meaning, therefore, is, that we believe God's design to have been unfeignedly for the salvation of all mankind, as well those who are out of the Church as those who are within it ; yet so as that this general design is not actually available for

the salvation of any particular (in an ordinary way, so as that the person may have the comfort of it) without the Church—nay, not within it without universal and sincere obedience. And the effect of this design to persons without the Church is to promise salvation, and a gracious acceptance of them, on condition of their incorporating themselves into it; and, in the mean time, to give that grace, which, if not resisted by their own free wills, may be sufficient to invite them into it. So also the present effect, even on vicious livers in the communion of the Church, is not that they shall be actually saved whilst they continue so, but that by virtue of their being in covenant they can challenge acceptance upon repentance, and plead promises upon performance of conditions, and can have a free and open access to the ordinary channels of grace to enable them to perform conditions—none of which can agree to persons without the Church, who cannot as yet be supposed to have any actual interest in the covenant. And upon these supposals it will be easy to conceive how, not only the actual performance of, but the very title to, promises may be confined to the Church, and yet God may sincerely design the universal salvation of mankind. For I think none can question but a design on performable conditions may be easily conceived to be sincere, though it should fail of the event, through a voluntary non-performance of conditions on the creature's part; and it hence appears that such a confinement of the promises to the Church is very reconcilable with such a design as this is for the universal salvation of mankind.

In the mean time, I think we may with more confidence pretend to all those texts produced by them for confining God's designs of benefits to be conveyed, by virtue of the new covenant, to the elect, than they can: for our notion of a Church is more obvious and ordinarily intelligible in that age, and even in the Scripture itself, than that which they pretend to; and it is exceedingly agreeable with the design of God in erecting the Church a body politic, thus to oblige men to enter into it, and to submit to its rules of discipline, however the secular state should stand affected; and it is better suited to the capacities and practice of even the very vulgar of that age, for whose use principally the Scriptures seem to have been written in that condescending style in which we find them: for what use can there be in practice of either of these discourses, if the persons hearing them cannot make out their interest in them? And it is certainly more easy for the most vulgar capacity whatsoever to prove their interest in a visible Church than in an invisible one, consisting only of elect persons. And I do not know but

they may, indeed, find that it is this election to grace actually, and to glory in design, which the Scripture generally speaks of, and that this election to grace does not so much imply an infallible and perpetual influence of grace on the person so elected, as his actual introduction to the ordinary means of grace which others had been permitted to reject; which amounts exactly to our present design of admission into the Church as I have now explained it (which though it be a notion I think exceedingly defensible, yet I would not engage the stress of my present cause in a discourse so seemingly exotical to our design any further than needs I must). And it will not engage us to answer that current of Scripture which seems directly opposite to the meaning imposed on these places by our adversaries; and less is requisite to justify our sense than theirs, who therefore ought to have more and greater proof for what they add beyond our assertions.

This therefore being supposed, that the promises are confined to the covenant, I infer further, fourthly, that he who would pretend any title to the promises must, in order thereunto, prove his interest in the covenant. For, if the promises be God's part of the evangelical covenant, none can challenge them but he who has a legal title to them; and none can have a legal title to them who has not an interest in the covenant on which such a legal title at least must be founded, because the covenant is, indeed, itself the legal conveyance; and it is only such a legal challenge that can give us comfort and confidence that they belong to us. And as by our interest in the covenant we may argue positively that we have an interest in the promises, not actual and absolute, but upon performance of conditions (which is more than can be pleaded by persons not yet admitted into the covenant); so the negative way of arguing (for which we are at present concerned) is much more certain—that he who cannot prove his interest in the covenant, whatever his performance of conditions may be, cannot challenge a legal title to the promises. And as I have shown that even the things promised cannot be hoped for by one in such a condition, upon any grounds so secure as a prudent person might safely venture on with any comfort or confidence; so, indeed, a promise, as a promise, is itself a legal way of conveyance, and therefore, as it is the nature of all like conveyances, cannot—I do not say easily, but not at all—be challenged on any but a legal title.

THE UNITY OF RELIGIOUS ASSEMBLIES.

BY THE
VERY REV. WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D. D., DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.

RELIGION is the greatest concernment of mankind, both with respect to this life and the next; and the worship of God is the most excellent part of religion, as having God, the most excellent being, for its immediate object. This is the work and constant employment of angels and blessed spirits in heaven, who see the face of God, dwell in his presence, admire his essential glory and infinite perfections, and sing eternal hallelujahs to him. When we come to heaven, we shall have no unruly passions and appetites to govern: and though our souls shall be transformed into a pure flame of divine love, yet there will be no place for the laborious exercise of charity, in pitying and relieving one another; where all the inhabitants shall be perfectly happy in the enjoyment of the most perfect good.

Indeed, in this world, temperance and charity are no Christian virtues, but as they are acts of worship; that is, as they flow from a great sense of God, and veneration for him: for God is the sole object of religion; and to be sober, and to be charitable upon some meaner considerations, without any respect to God, as the last end of all, is to serve ourselves or our friends, or to follow the inclinations of our nature, but is not properly the service of God.

Whatsoever we do out of a just sense of God, is, in some respects, an act of worship, for it is to honour the Deity, which may as effectually be done by actions as by words. Verbal praises are of no value with God—are mere lip labour and formal compliments, when they are alone, and produce no answerable effects in our lives. This is what the apostle calls “a form of godliness, without the power of it.” Religion is nothing else but such a vital sense of God as excites in us devout affections, and discovers itself in a divine and heavenly conversation.

But yet that which we more strictly call worship, is the most visible and solemn expression of our honour for God when we lift up our hearts, and our eyes, and hands to God in prayers, praises, and thanksgivings; and, when it is sincere and hearty, has a powerful influence upon the government of our lives. For what sincere worshipper can be so void of all fear of God as to

break his laws, and condemn his authority, and despise his judgments? And therefore that vain and hypocritical semblance of religion, wherewith some bad men deceive themselves and flatter God, is called the "form of godliness, without the power"—it being only an external imitation of religious worship, without that powerful sense of God which governs the lives of truly devout and pious men.

And as the worship of God is the most excellent part of religion, which has the most universal and most powerful influence upon our lives; so public worship is the most excellent worship, as you shall hear more hereafter. Indeed, the right and power of holding public assemblies for worship is the fundamental right of the Church, whereon all Church authority depends, as has been well observed and proved by a learned man* of our Church. The power of the keys signifies no more than authority to take in and to shut out of the Church: the first is done by baptism; the second, by Church censures, the highest of which is excommunication, which debarreth men from all parts of Christian communion.

And therefore the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes forsaking Christian assemblies either to be an apostasy from Christianity, as it was in those days, or at least a fair step towards it: he exhorts those to whom he wrote "to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering;" that is, to continue firm and steadfast in the profession of Christianity: and, in order to this, gives them this caution, "Not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day approaching." Which at least supposes, that to forsake the assemblies of Christians does greatly dispose men to a final apostasy, as appears from the following verses, wherein he urges the great danger of apostasy; which had been nothing to his purpose had not separation, at least, been the beginning of it: "But if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of vengeance and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy that trampleth under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

The truth is, whoever carefully examines the state of the

* Thorndike's "Right of Christian Assemblies."

apostolical Churches, according to that account we find of them in the writings of the apostles (and I may add of the succeeding ages), from the report of the most primitive and apostolical Fathers, will find that none but apostates from Christianity (by apostates, not meaning those who wholly renounced the name and profession, but those who renounced the truth of Christian doctrine) actually separated from the communion of the Church.

There were schisms and divisions in the Church of Corinth, which St. Paul reproves them for; but we do not find that they actually separated into distinct communions, but contended among themselves about the preference of several apostles, which of them was greatest: "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas (or Peter), and I of Christ." And this seems to be the case in the second schism of Corinth, in the time of Clemens Romanus, who wrote a letter to them in the name of the Church of Rome, persuading them to peace, unity, and order.

But besides these schisms in the Church—which St. Paul makes a great sign of carnality: "For are ye not carnal? for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?"—there were also schisms from the Church; as we learn from St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy: "For of this sort are they who creep into houses (who keep secret and clandestine meetings) and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts; ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth;" that is, they opposed themselves against the apostles of Christ, who were the only teachers of the true religion, and were that to the Christian Church which Moses was to the Jews. Which plainly signifies that they set themselves up against the apostles, and gathered Churches in opposition to them.

Of such separatists St. John speaks, whom he calls anti-christs: "They went out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Where the apostle expressly affirms that they went out from them; that is, forsook the Christian assemblies: by which he proves that they were not of them, *i. e.*, that they did not belong to the same body and society, but had entertained such doctrines as were destructive to the Christian faith, for otherwise they would not have separated from the Christian Church.

Now this necessarily supposes that Christian communion is so indispensable a duty, that no man can causelessly separate from the Christian Church without at least bringing his Christianity into question; that nothing can reasonably tempt men to a separation, but their renouncing some great article of the Christian faith; nor can anything justify a separation, but such corruptions as destroy the faith once delivered to the saints; for otherwise there had been no force in the apostle's argument to prove that they were corrupt in the faith from their separation: "They went out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." So that, though we should grant that schism (as Dr. Owen earnestly contends) signifies no more than divisions and contentions among the members of the same Church, without the breach of Church communion, and therefore separatists are not properly schismatics, I know not what he gains by this, when separation in the apostles' days was looked upon as a much greater evil than schism, and that none but heretics, or apostates from the truth of Christian doctrine, were in those days guilty of it; and if the apostle's argument holds good, a sinful and causeless separation can never be owned without some degree of apostasy.

It is to no great purpose to dispute the signification of words, when the difference between things is plain and notorious. But yet there seems to be a manifest difference in Scripture between schism and heresy: the first being commonly applied to signify those divisions which were among Christians in the same communion; the second, if not always, yet chiefly applied to signify separation from the Church: for *αἵρεσις* properly signifies a sect, or party, and *ἁρετικὸς* a sectarian. Thus Christianity itself, when the Christians united into a distinct Church society, was called *heresy*, or a new sect, and the *sect of the Nazarenes*. Thus we read of the *sect of the Sadducees*, and the *sect of the Pharisees*, where the word *αἵρεσις*, or *heresy*, is always used.

Now though these different sects among the Jews did not separate into distinct assemblies for worship, but all worshipped at the temple—as even the Christian Jews did while the temple stood, as appears from what happened to St. Paul at Jerusalem the last time he went thither—yet they were distinguished by different opinions, rights and usages, and schools, and (which is usually the effect of such distinctions) by different interests and affections. And, in allusion to those Jewish sects, these differences among Christians, which did not break forth into open separation, but occasioned great sidings, and parties, and heats, and animosities, were indifferently called *schisms*, or *heresies*.

Thus Saint Paul joins "hatred, variance, wrath, seditions, heresy."

But then there were another sort of heresies, which always ended in separation; for such men were always either cast out of the Church, or separated themselves. Such are those which St. Peter calls "damnable heresies," whom he compares with the fallen angels, and the old world, which was destroyed with a deluge of water, and Sodom and Gomorrah; whom he calls "presumptuous, self-willed, and that are not afraid to speak evil of dignities;" that is, who did wilfully and obstinately oppose the apostles of Christ, who were invested with his authority, answerable to the sin of those in the Jewish Church who set themselves up against Moses and Aaron, and reproached the rulers of the people; and it is expressly called, "Doing presumptuously, not to hearken to the priest that standeth to minister before the Lord." And therefore these men are said "to have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray." And whoever compares this chapter with St. Jude's Epistle, will find that St. Peter and St. Jude speak of the same men, for their characters do exactly agree; and of them St. Jude tells us, "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." And thus, in the first ages of Christianity, no men ever separated from the communion of the Church but such gross heretics, the several sorts of Gnostics, of whom Irenæus and Epiphanius give us a large and particular account; and for this reason the name *heresy*, which properly signifies a sect or separation, came to be applied to corrupt and heretical doctrines, which in those days were the only cause of separations.

And we may find some remains of this ancient and original use of these words in after ages; for though *schism* commonly was used in Church writers to signify separation from Church communion, and *heresy* to signify false doctrine, yet separation from the Christian Church, though it were only occasioned upon a dispute about discipline, without any other error in matters of faith, was called *heresy*. Thus St. Cyprian, I remember, calls the schism of Novatianus *heretical impiety*; and in answer to that question of Antonianus, "What heresy Novatianus was the author of?" he alleges nothing but the breach of the peace and unity of the Church, and says that "we ought not curiously to enquire what he teaches, who is out of the Church; for, whatever he be, he is no Christian who is not in the Church of Christ." And thus Felicissimus and his adherents are called "an heretical faction;" though the schism was occasioned only by a dispute of discipline, concerning the restoring the lapsed to the peace and communion of the Church.

So that, in St. Cyprian's time, separation from the Church, without any other error in the fundamentals of faith, was called *heresy*.

And though *heresy* did most frequently signify corrupt doctrine, yet a mere error in doctrine was not thought a complete formal heresy, without such wilfulness and obstinacy as ended in separation : and therefore St. Augustine describes heretics to be those "who hold some false and corrupt doctrines, and when they are reproved, in order to reduce them to truth and sobriety of judgment, do obstinately resist, and refuse to correct their poisonous and damnable opinions, but persist in defending them. Thus they become heretics, and, going out of the Church, become its enemies," &c. And this I take to be the meaning of this Father in that famed saying, "*Errare possum, hæreticus esse nolo*—though he might err, yet he would not be a heretic ;" that is, that he would not so obstinately persist in the defence of any private opinion in opposition to the received doctrine of the Christian Church, as to break the communion of the Church upon that account.

Now if this were the case, that besides those divisions among Christians in the same communion, which are called *schisms* by St. Paul, there were formal separations from the Church, of a much more heinous nature, which none in those days were guilty of, but those who renounced the purity of the Christian doctrine—if such separations were always condemned in the primitive Church as heresy and apostasy from Christianity, though such separatists were not guilty of any fundamental error in doctrines of faith, I see not what Dr. Owen gains by proving that separation is no schism, when it appears to be a much greater evil.

And, indeed, if the doctor will allow schism to be a great evil, when it signifies no more than contentions and quarrels in a Church, any one would reasonably think that separation from a Church should be a much greater evil ; for contentions and quarrels are then come to their height and perfection, when they make friends, brethren, and confederates part company : and it seems strange that less quarrels should be a greater evil than greater quarrels, unless he thinks it is with schism, as under the law it was in the case of leprosy, that when the whole body was overspread with it, the leper was pronounced clean.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF WORSHIP.

BY

WM. SAYWELL, D.D., MASTER OF JESUS COLL., CAMBRIDGE.

THE adversaries of our Church have in nothing found greater success in alienating the minds of the poor people from our communion, than by casting abroad prejudices amongst them about the circumstances of worship.

Therefore, that I may give the reader satisfaction in these, as well as in other matters, I will set down what Dr. Owen and Mr. Baxter say concerning them, and will begin with Dr. Owen. "It is merely from a spirit of contention that some call on us or others to produce express testimony [he means of Scripture], or institutions, for every circumstance in the practice of religious duties. Such things as these are the times and seasons of Church assemblies, the order and decency wherein all things are to be transacted in them—what special advantages are to be made use of in preaching [as homilies, pulpits, &c.], translations and tunes of psalms in singing [as also organs, &c., to help the voices to sing melodiously], continuance in public duties [how long or how short], and the like [what habit and what gesture]: the things themselves, being divinely instituted, are capable of such general directions, in and by the light of nature, as may, with ordinary Christian prudence, be on all occasions applied unto the use and practice of the Church." And to show that these words did not fall by chance from the Doctor, you find him repeating the like: "There ought to be societies wherein men voluntarily join together for the solemn performance of divine worship [and therefore people must not forsake the assembling themselves together, and neglect the public service, on pretence of serving God at home], and joint walking in obedience before God; these societies ought to use such means, for their own peace and order, as the light of nature directs unto: and where men have a common interest, they ought to consult in common for the due management of it. The Lord Christ, in the institution of Gospel Churches, their state, order, rule, and worship, doth not require of his disciples that in their observance of his appointments they should cease to be men, or forego the use and exercise of their rational abilities, according to the rule of that exercise which is the light of

nature. There are in the Scripture general rules directing us, in the application of natural light, unto such determination of all circumstances in the acts of Church rule and worship, as are sufficient for their performance decently and in order. Wherefore, as was said before, it is utterly in vain and useless to demand express institution of all the circumstances belonging unto the government, order, rule, and worship of the Church; or for the due improvement of things of themselves indifferent unto its edification, as occasion shall require. Nor are they capable to be otherwise stated, but as they lie in the light of nature and spiritual prudence, directed by the general rules of Scripture." So that these things are to be applied and determined by somebody, for order and decency can never be kept up by chance; neither will the vulgar sort be kept within any rule, unless there be some authority to determine every one's place and order, and to reprove and punish those that break such commands, as is evident in all great concourses and meetings of the multitude. Who, then, ought to apply these general rules to the particular circumstances but the governors, who have power to rebuke and chastise the offender if he do not observe such decency and order as shall be thought meet? And since we are to take the laws of nature for our guide, the common consent of mankind have generally agreed that it is the law of nature that governors in all societies should determine the modes and circumstances of all public affairs; and the same light of nature does teach, that those circumstances are most proper to be observed which custom and general usage have led men unto: therefore what is thought most honourable and expressive of the greatest reverence amongst men, ought, with the same parity of reason, to be understood to signify our devotion to God. And the imitating such customary ways of showing respect is approved by God himself. Thus when God appeared to Moses in the bush, God required him to come near with all reverence, and in token thereof, it being the way of approaching to great persons in that country, to put off his shoes, "for the place where thou standest is holy ground;" but that being not now a custom of honour in use amongst us, but putting off the hat, that we ought to do instead thereof, when we speak to God, or appear in his house, where we ought to have all awful thoughts, and by our outward behaviour testify our honour of him, for whose service it is set apart.

Mr. Baxter does plainly ascribe the power of determining these circumstances unto governors as fully as anybody can desire. "We suppose that there are some circumstances of the minister's work which it belongeth to his own office to

determine of. [Such as are, when to marry, christen, or bury, &c., within canonical times, or when to appoint a communion on other days besides those prescribed by law, &c.] But there are others which it is meet shou'd be universally determined of, for the concord of all Churches in the kingdom. These the pastors and Churches, by consent, may agree in without a law, if kings leave it to them. And kings, by the advice of such as best understand Church cases, may well, by their own laws, make such determinations." As for instance, "in what Scripture translations, what versions and metres of psalms, the Churches shall agree. Much more may they determine of the public maintenance of ministers, and the temples, and such other extrinsic accidents." Again: "It is schism when men separate out of unruliness of spirit, because they will not be governed by their lawful pastors in lawful things, as time, place, order, &c." And yet more fully: "We flatly affirm, as well as you, that the king's laws do bind the mind, or soul (or conscience, if you will call it so), to a conscionable performance of all his lawful commands."

"We are so tender of disobeying our rulers, that we will do anything to obey and please them, except disobeying God."

So that, for the circumstances of time, place, order, &c., lawful pastors may prescribe them; and it is unruliness of spirit, and schismatical, to make that a pretence for separation and not obeying them. And what a vast many controversies and objections will this one principle of his put an end to, between the Church of England and Dissenters. For hence it will evidently follow that all the quarrels about holy-days, Lent, and other fasting days, must be laid aside; for there must be times of solemn praising God, and humbling ourselves by fasting and prayer, and these the lawful pastors may appoint. And since they have appointed those which the Christian Church has generally observed in all ages, there can be no ground to except against their observance; and under the title of place, order, &c., will come in all the other usages which Dissenters take offence at. Such as the habit the minister wears, whether surplice or a gown, or any other badge the Church shall appoint. The part of the Church where he officiates, so as it be where the people can hear—as baptism at the font, reading morning and evening prayer in the desk, and the communion service at the table where that holy sacrament is usually administered. And lastly, by the same principle, we must allow of the duty of kneeling at prayers, and at the receiving of the sacrament, standing up at the creeds and hymns, and such other accidents of reverence and humble behaviour while we are in

God's house. For these in themselves are lawful, being no where prohibited by God; and therefore rulers, who are to be obeyed in all lawful commands, must be obeyed in these also.

And here now let all understanding and well-meaning people, that have been misled into an admiration of the Dissenters, consider how grossly they have been abused and cheated by them, and how shamefully the Church of England, and even the Christian Church in general, have been calumniated by their teachers, as bordering upon superstition and idolatry, bringing in human inventions, by laying impositions that were not in Scripture, when they applied these circumstances of worship to the particular occasions and conveniences of the Church: when Dr. Owen himself says, "Nor are they capable to be otherwise stated, but as they lie in the light of nature, and spiritual prudence, directed by the general rules of Scripture." And, speaking of church, state, and religious worship, he does moreover acknowledge, "Where men have a common interest, they ought to consult in common for the due management of it." And is it not the common interest of the nation to preserve order, peace, and holiness amongst all the members thereof, who must have mutual intercourse and communion one with another? And does it not much conduce to these ends when they are put to no doubts and scruples concerning their religious duties, because they find the same order, the same rules of worship, the same prayers and sacraments, in whatsoever church or parish they remove unto? But what endless perplexities and difficulties would people be put upon, if they were to enter into an examination into the grounds and reasons of the religion and worship that was professed in every place whither they travel, or have occasion to fix their habitations? Nay, if it were left to the pleasure of every minister to vary and change, and do what he list, every Lord's day, and time of public assembly, how could they ever be satisfied in this matter? So that since Dr. Owen does say, "where there is a common interest, they ought to consult in common for the due management of it"—it being the common interest of the nation that the grounds and occasions of all offence and controversy, in the circumstances and order of religious assemblies, should be taken away—the law of nature and common prudence do direct that the governors and representatives, ecclesiastical and civil, should consult in common about them, and agree in such circumstances as they shall think in their prudence are most meet. And if a minor part in Dr. Owen's assembly ought to be concluded, and sit down satisfied with the determination of the major, why ought not

the major part, or the concurrent determination of the representatives of the whole kingdom, in their respective capacities, conclude the rest also? And what are our ecclesiastical laws, rubrics, and canons, which they cry out upon, but the results of such common consultations about the due management of the common interest, the peace and order of all religious assemblies, that persons may have opportunity to serve God decently and in order, unto whatsoever parish or country they have occasion to go?

The separatists would do well to consider also what danger they fall into, by following weaver, cobbler, and tinker preachers. Dr. Owen and Mr. Baxter, two learned men, confess you are in an error when you call for Scripture for every circumstance and mode of worship; men of learning and honesty scorn to abuse you so: they were your tinker, your weaver preachers, or men of their level, that filled you with such prejudices and objections against the Church of England. For Mr. Baxter does plainly tell you, "It is schism when men separate out of unruliness of spirit, because they will not be governed by their lawful pastors in lawful things, as time, place, order, &c., or because a minor part in elections." He might as well have said also, "In common consultations about due management of affairs of common interest," as Dr. Owen has it, "is over-voted by the major part, and cannot have their wills." And Dr. Owen does confess, "It is merely from a spirit of contention that some call on us and others to produce express testimony or institution [of Scripture he means] for every circumstance in the practice of religious duties, which may, with ordinary Christian prudence, be, on all occasions, applied unto the use and practice of the Church." Therefore, to put an end to this chapter, I appeal to the common reason of mankind, whether it will not be merely from a spirit of contention, as Dr. Owen has it, or unruliness of spirit, as Mr. Baxter says it is, for Dr. Owen and his congregation, or any other Dissenters, to oppose their ordinary Christian prudence to the prudence and determination of the Church universal, and the constitution of our nation, about the circumstances of religious worship, and to complain of impositions, because their governors apply them on all occasions, to prevent their being misapplied by private men.

THE
UNREASONABLENESS OF SEPARATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

FOR our better understanding the state of this controversy, it will be necessary to premise these two things—

1. That although the present reasons for separation would have held from the beginning of our reformation, yet no such thing was then practised or allowed by those who were then most zealous for reformation.

2. That when separation began, it was most vehemently opposed by those nonconformists who disliked many things in our Church, and wished for a farther reformation. And from a true account of the state of the controversy then, it will appear that the principles owned by them do overthrow the present practice of separation among us.

In the making out of these, I shall give a full account of the rise and progress of this controversy about separation from the communion of our Church.

1. That although the present reasons for separation would have held from the beginning of the reformation, yet no such thing was then practised or allowed by those who were then most zealous for reformation. By separation, we mean nothing else but withdrawing from the constant communion of our Church, and joining with separate congregations, for greater purity of worship, and better means of edification. By the present reasons for separation, we understand such as are at this day insisted on by those who pretend to justify these practices; and those are such as make the terms of communion with our Church to be unlawful. And not one of all those, which my adversaries at this time hope to justify the present separation by, but would have had as much force in the beginning of the reformation. For our Church stands on the same grounds; useth the same ceremonies (only fewer); prescribes the same Liturgy (only more corrected); hath the same constitution and frame of government; the same defect of discipline; the same manner of appointing parochial ministers; and at least as effectual means of edification, as there were when the reformation was first established. And what advantage there is, in our present circumstances, as to the number, diligence, and learning of

our allowed preachers ; as to the retrenching of some ceremonies, and the explication of the meaning of others ; as to the mischiefs we have seen follow the practice of separation ; do all make it much more unreasonable now than it had been then.

2. It cannot be denied that there were different apprehensions concerning some few things required by our Church in the beginning of the reformation ; but they were such things as are the least scrupled now. Rogers refused the wearing of a square cap, tippet, &c., unless a difference were made between the Popish priests and ours. Hooper at first scrupled the episcopal habits, but he submitted afterwards to the use of them. Bucer, and some others, disliked some things in the first Common Prayer-book of Edward VI., which were corrected in the second : so that upon the review of the Liturgy there seemed to be little or no dissatisfaction left in the members of our Church—at least, as to those things which are now made the grounds of separation. For we read of none who refused the constant use of the Liturgy, or to comply with those very few ceremonies which were retained—as the cross in baptism, and kneeling at the communion, which are now thought such bugbears to scare people from our communion, and make them cry out in such a dreadful manner of the mischief of impositions ; as though the Church must unavoidably be broken in pieces by the weight and burden of two or three such insupportable ceremonies. Now we are told that it is unreasonable that any should create a necessity of separation, and then complain of an impossibility of union. By whom—at what time—in what manner was this necessity of separation created ? Hath our Church made any new terms of communion, or altered the old ones ? No : the same author saith, “It is perpetuating the old conditions, and venturing our peace in an old worm-eaten bottom, wherein it must certainly miscarry.”

Not to insist on his way of expression, in calling the reformation an old worm-eaten bottom, which ill becomes them that would now be held the most zealous Protestants, I would only know if those terms of communion, which were imposed by the martyrs and other reformers, and which are only continued by us, do, as this author saith, create a necessity of separation, how then it came to pass that, in all King Edward's days, there was no such thing as division in our Church about them ?

And even Dr. Ames, who searched as carefully as any into this matter, can bring no other instances of any differences then, but those of Rogers and Hooper : he adds, indeed, that Ridley and others agreed with Hooper. Wherein ? What, in opposing our ceremonies, when Hooper himself yielded in that which he

at first scrupled? No; but there was a perfect reconciliation between them before they suffered. And what then? Is there any, the least, colour of evidence, that before that reconciliation either Hooper or Rogers held separate assemblies from the conformists, or that Ridley ever receded from his steadfast adhering to the orders of this Church? This is, then, a very mean artifice, and disingenuous insinuation. For although Ridley, in his letter to Hooper, out of his great modesty and humility, seems to take the blame upon himself, by attributing the greater wisdom to Hooper in that difference; yet he doth not retract his opinion, but only declares the hearty love that he bore to him for his constancy in the truth. Neither do we find that ever Hooper repented of his submission, to which he was so earnestly persuaded, both by Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer; and Peter Martyr, in his letter to Bucer, condemns his forwardness, and saith, "that his cause was by no means approved by the wiser and better sort of men." But Ames saith, "Mr. Bradford might have been added, who called forked caps and tippets antichristian pelf and baggage." Suppose this were true, it proves no more than that a good man had an unreasonable scruple, and such as is thought so by our brethren themselves at this day. But did he ever divide the Church on such an account as this? Did he set up separate congregations, because a square cap and a tippet would not go down with him? No, he was a far better man than to do so. But if the whole words had been set down, the seeming force of the words had been taken away, for they are these: "The cognizance of the Lord standeth not in forked caps, tippets, shaven crowns, or such other baggage and antichristian pelf, but in suffering for the Lord's sake;" *i. e.*, it is more a mark of God's service to suffer martyrdom as a Protestant, than to be at ease as a Romish priest; for he puts them altogether—caps, tippets, and shaven crowns. And what is this to the impositions of our Church, or separation on the account of them? Dr. Ames knew too much to pretend to anything like that in those times; for there was no such thing as separation from our Church then heard of, on the account of these dividing impositions. Some furious Anabaptists, it may be, or secret Papists, then had separate meetings, of which Ridley bids enquiry to be made, in his Articles of Visitation: but no Protestants, none that joined in the articles of our faith, and substantial of religion with our Church, as Dr. Owen speaks, did then apprehend any necessity of separation from it; not for the sake of the ariel sign of the cross; nor kneeling at the communion; nor the religious observation of holy-days; nor the constant use of the Liturgy; nor any one of all the particulars

mentioned by Dr. Owen, which, he saith, “makes our communion unlawful, and separation from it to be necessary.” How came these terms of communion to be so unlawful now, which were then approved by such holy, learned, and excellent men as our first reformers? Were they not arrived to that measure of attainments, or comprehension of the truths of the Gospel, that men in our age are come to? Is it credible that men of so great integrity, such indefatigable industry, such profound judgment, as Cranmer and Ridley, who were the heads of the reformation, should discern no such sinfulness in these things, which now every dissenting artificer can cry out upon as unlawful? Is it possible that men that sifted everything with so much care themselves, and made use of the best help from others, and begged the divine assistance, should so fatally miscarry in a matter of such mighty importance to the souls of men? Could not Latimer, or Bradford, or such holy and mortified men as they, discern so much as a mote of unlawfulness in those times, which others espy such beams in now? What makes this wonderful difference of eyesight? Were they under a cloudy, and dark, and Jewish dispensation; and all the clear Gospel light of division and separation reserved for our times? Did they want warmth and zeal for religion, who burnt at the stake for it? Doth God reveal his will to the meek, the humble, the inquisitive, the resolute minds? And would he conceal such weighty things from those who were so desirous to find the truth, and so resolved to adhere to it? If diocesan episcopacy and the constitution of our Church were such an unlawful thing, as some now make it, it is strange such men should have no suspicion of it—no, not when they went to suffer. For as H. Jacob, the old nonconformist, saith, in answer to Johnson, the separatist, “Did not M. Cranmer hold himself for archbishop still, and that he was by the Pope unjustly and insufficiently deposed, and by Queen Mary forcibly restrained from it? Did he ever repent of holding that office to his death? Also did not Ridley stand upon his right to the bishopric of London, though ready to die? Latimer, though he renounced his bishopric, yet he kept his ministry, and never repented of it. Philpot never disliked his archdeaconry: yea, when he refused bloody Bonner, yet he appealed to his ordinary, the Bishop of Winchester. The like mind is to be seen in Bishop Farrar. And generally, whosoever were ministers then of the prelates’ ordination, they never renounced it, though they died martyrs.” Johnson, indeed, quotes some passages of Bradford, Hooper, and Bale, against the hierarchy; but he notoriously misapplies the words of Bradford, which are, “The time was when the Pope was out of

England, but not all Popery ;” which he would have understood of the times of reformation, under Edward VI., whereas he speaks them expressly of King Henry’s days. And it is not credible Hooper should think the hierarchy unlawful, who (as it is generally believed) had the administration of two bishoprics at once. Bale’s words were spoken in Henry VIII.’s time ; and could not be meant of a Protestant hierarchy, for he was after a bishop himself. But H. Jacob answers to them all, “ That supposing these men disliked the hierarchy, it made the stronger against the principles of separation : seeing, for all that, they did not refuse to communicate and partake with them then as true Christians.” And that not only occasionally, and at certain seasons, but they maintained constant and fixed communion with our Church, as the members of it.

3. Thus matters stood as to communion with our Church in the days of Edward VI. ; but as soon as the persecution began in Queen Mary’s time, great numbers were forced to betake themselves to foreign parts, whereof some went to Zurich, others to Basil, others to Strasburg, and others to Frankfort. Grindal, in a letter to Bishop Ridley, saith they were nigh one hundred students and ministers in exile : these, with the people in all other places, Geneva excepted, kept to the orders established in our Church ; but at Frankfort some began to be very busy in reforming our Liturgy, leaving out many things, and adding others, which occasioned the following troubles of Frankfort ; the true ground whereof is commonly much misrepresented. Mr. Baxter saith, “ the difference was between those which strove for the English Liturgy, and others that were for a free way of praying (*i. e.*, as he explains it), from the present sense and habit of the speaker ;” but that this is a great mistake, will appear from the account published of them, A.D. 1575, by one that was a friend to the dissenting party. From which it appears, that no sooner were the English arrived at Frankfort, but the minister of the French congregation there came to them, and told them he had obtained from the magistrates the freedom of a church for those who came out of England, but especially for the French ; they thanked him and the magistrates for so much kindness, but withal let them understand this would be little benefit to the English, unless they might have the liberty of performing all the offices of religion in their own tongue. Upon an address made to the senate, this request was granted them ; and they were to make use of the French church at different times, as the French and they could agree, but with this express proviso, that they should not dissent from the French in doctrine or ceremonies, lest they should thereby

minister occasion of offence. But afterwards, it seems, the magistrates did not require them to be strictly tied up to the French ceremonies ; so they did mutually agree. Upon this they perused the English order, and endeavoured to bring it as near as they could to the French model, by leaving out the responses, the Litany, surplice, and many other things, and adding a larger confession more suitable to the state and time ; after which a psalm was sung ; then the minister, after a short prayer for divine assistance (according to Calvin's custom), was to proceed to the sermon ; which being ended, then followed a general prayer for all estates, particularly for England, ending with the Lord's prayer, and so repeating the articles of the creed ; and, another psalm sung, the people were dismissed with the blessing. By which we see here was not the least controversy, whether a Liturgy or not ; but whether the order of service was not to be accommodated, as much as might be, to the French model. However, when they sent to the English in other places to resort thither, by reason of the great conveniences they enjoyed, and acquainted them with what they had done, it gave great offence to them, which they expressed in their letters. Those of Zurich sent them word, "they determined to use no other order than that which was last established in England ;" and in another letter "they desire to be assured, from them, that if they remove thither, they should all join in the same order of service, concerning religion, which was in England last set forth by King Edward." To this the congregation of Frankfurt returned answer, "that they could not, in all points, warrant the full use of the book of service, which they impute to their present circumstances, in which they suppose such alterations would be allowed ; but they intended not hereby to deface the worthy laws and ordinances of King Edward." These learned men of Strasburg, understanding their resolutions, sent Grindal to them with a letter subscribed by sixteen ; wherein they entreat them "to reduce the English Church there as much as possible to the order lately set forth in England, lest (say they), by much altering of the same, they should seem to condemn the chief authors thereof, who, as they now suffer, so are they most ready to confirm that fact with the price of their bloods ; and should also both give occasion to our adversaries to accuse our doctrine of imperfection, and us of mutability ; and the godly to doubt of that truth wherein before they were persuaded, and to hinder their coming thither, which before they had purposed." And, to obtain their desire, they tell them "they had sent persons for that end to negotiate this affair with the magistrates ; and, in case they obtained their request, they

promised to come and join with them; and they did not question the English in other places would do the same." Notwithstanding the weight of these reasons, and the desirableness of their brethren's company in that time of exile, they persist in their former resolutions, not to have the entire English Liturgy; for by this time Knox was come from Geneva, being chosen minister of the congregation: however, they returned this answer to Strasburg, "that they made as little alteration as was possible; for certain ceremonies the country would not bear, and they did not dissent from those which lie at the ransom of their bloods for the doctrine, whereof they have made a most worthy confession."

About this time some suggested that they should take the order of Geneva, as farthest from superstition; but Knox declined this till they had advised with the learned men at Strasburg, Zurich, Emden, &c., knowing that the odium of it would be thrown upon him. But, finding their zeal and concernment for the English Liturgy, he, with Whittingham and some others, drew up an abstract of it, and sent it to Calvin, desiring his judgment of it: who, upon perusal of it, being thoroughly heated in a cause that so nearly concerned him, writes a very sharp letter, directed to the brethren at Frankfort, gently rebuking them for their unseasonable contentions about these matters, but severely reproving the English divines who stood up for the English Liturgy when the model of Geneva stood in competition with it. And yet, after all his censures of it, he confesses the things he thought most unfit were tolerable, but he blames them if they did not choose a better, when they might choose; but he gives not the least encouragement to separation, if it were continued; and he declares, for his own part, how easy he was to yield in all indifferent things, such as external rites are. And he was so far, in his judgment, from being for free prayer, or making the constant use of a Liturgy a ground of separation, as Dr. Owen doth, that when he delivered his opinion, with the greatest freedom, to the then Protector, about the best method of reformation, he declares "that he did mightily approve a certain form, from which men ought not to vary, both to prevent the inconveniences which some men's folly would betray them to (in the free way of praying), and to manifest the general consent of the Churches in their prayers, and to stop the vain affectation of some who love to be showing some new things." Let Mr. Baxter now judge whether it were likely that the controversy then at Frankfort was, as he saith, between them that were for the English Liturgy and others that were for a free way of praying, when Calvin, to whom the Dissenters appealed, was so much, in his

judgment, against the latter. And it appears, by Calvin's letter to Cox and his brethren, that the state of the case at Frankfort had not been truly represented to him, which made him write with greater sharpness than otherwise he would have done; and he expresses his satisfaction that the matter was so composed among them, when, by Dr. Cox's means, the English Liturgy was brought into use at Frankfort. And to excuse himself for his liberal censures before, he mentions lights, as required by the book, which were not in the second Liturgy of Edward VI. So that either they deceived him who sent him the abstract, or he was put to this miserable shift to defend himself, the matter being ended contrary to his expectation: for although, upon the receipt of Calvin's letter, the order of Geneva had like to have been presently voted in, yet, there being still some fast friends to the English service, they were fain to compromise the matter, and to make use of a mixed form for the present. But Dr. Cox and others, coming thither from England, and disliking these alterations, declared that they were for having the face of an English Church there; and so they began the Litany next Sunday, which put Knox into so great a rage, that, instead of pursuing his text (which was directly contrary), he made it his business to lay open the nakedness of our Church as far as his wit and ill will would carry him. He charged the Service-book with superstition, impurity, and imperfection, and the governors of our Church with slackness in reformation, want of discipline, with the business of Hooper, allowing pluralities—all the ill things he could think of. When Cox and his party (with whom, at this time, was our excellent Jewel) were admitted among them, they presently forbade Knox having anything farther to do in that congregation; who being complained of soon after for treason against the emperor, in a book by him published, he was forced to leave the city and to retire to Geneva, whither most of his party followed him. And thus, saith Grindal, in his letter to Bishop Ridley, the Church at Frankfort was well quieted by the prudence of Mr. Cox and others, which met there for that purpose.

PENANCE.

BY THE REV. TIMOTHY PULLER, D.D.

OUR Church behaves it most moderately between the two extremes of those who slight all due penance, and of those who explain it differently from the true nature of it.

The Council of Trent declares it of necessity, by divine right, for every one, of both sexes, once a year to confess to a priest, as his judge next to God, all and singular their mortal sins which they can possibly recollect, even the most secret, with all their circumstances, or else they had as good do nothing (as the Council saith*) ; which confession, with contrition and satisfaction, are, with them, the matter of penance ; and the form is the word of absolution from the priest : which make up their entire sacrament. Whereas our Church doth suppose the nature of true penitence doth consist in true change of mind and effectual amendment of life, which, when it is sincere, there will be so much of the rest as is useful. In the convocation, 1536, at the first dawning of the reformation, it was determined that perfect penance, which Christ required, consisteth of three parts—contrition, confession, and amendment of former life, and a new obedient reconciliation to the laws and will of God. The same is earnestly enforced in our Homilies.

Bishop Bramhall very compendiously enumerated the Romanists' abuses of confession, "in tricking it up in the robes of a sacrament ; by obtruding a particular and plenary enumeration of all sins to man, as absolutely necessary to salvation ; by divine institution ; by making it (with their commutations) a remedy rather for the confessor's purse, than the confitent's soul—as Chaucer observed, 'He knew how to impose an easy penance where he could look for a good pittance, by making it a pick-lock to know the secrets of states and families ;' by absolving before they enjoin ecclesiastical satisfaction ; by reducing it to a customary formality, as it were but the concluding an old score to begin a new."

Our Church doth declare the necessity of such a confession as is useful to the purposes of true repentance ; that is, when confession to the minister of God may be useful for spiritual

* "Qui verò secus faciunt nihil ! Divinæ bonitati per sacerdotem remittendum proponunt."—*Conc. Trid. de Confes.*, c. v.

advice, and for the quieting of any one's conscience, in order to a good life or happy death, and particularly in order to the fruitful receiving the holy communion.* In King Edward VI.'s time, in the order of the communion, the exhortation was thus: "And if there be any of you whose conscience is troubled and grieved at any time, lacking comfort and counsel, let him come unto me, or to some other discreet and learned priest taught in the law of God, and confess his open sin and grief secretly, that he may receive such ghostly counsel, that his conscience may be relieved,† and that of us, as a minister of God and of his Church, he may receive comfort and absolution, to the satisfaction of his mind, and avoiding all scruple and doubtfulness: requiring such, as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession to their priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins unto God, and the general confession to the Church; but in all these things to follow and keep the rule of charity, and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or acts, whereas he hath no warrant of God's word for the same." So much the spirit of moderation did move in our Church from the first of the reformation, and was perfected in what after was ordered.‡ If any men do find themselves troubled (saith the Homily), they may repair to some godly learned man, &c. But it is against true liberty that any man should be bound to the numbering of his sins, as has been used heretofore in the time of ignorance.

In the meanwhile, how slanderously are we reported by the Romanists, in the recantation some of them made for Anton. de Dom., sect. xxv., thus speaking of the men of the Church of England: "Amongst them scant ever saw I any reformation: for the most part, all care of conscience is cast away: they are not (except some few) troubled with any scruples for adulteries, robberies, or deceiving their neighbours; for they have wickedly abolished auricular confession."

Indeed, such auricular confession as is in practice in the Roman Church,§ the Church of England hath utterly rejected,

* *Vide* Exhortation to the Holy Communion.

† "Liberum aditum ad ministrum habeat et ab illo levationem ægritudinis accipiat."—*Reform. leg. Eccl. de div. Off.*, c. vii.

‡ "Absit repetendi confessionem superstitio, absit anxietas enumerandi commissæ et circumstantias."—*Erasm. de amab. Eccl. Concord. Homily of Rep.*, part ii.

§ Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri.

it being devised to pry into the secrets of governments, and such private circumstances of actions, which to unveil is neither the interest of private persons nor of priests. "It is more plain (saith our Homily*) that this auricular confession hath not its warrant of God's word, else it had not been lawful for Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople,† upon just occasions to have put it down." Yet the same Homily earnestly commends to us confession of our sins before God; and one to another, for reconciliation of offences; and to the minister of God, for his ghostly counsel and absolution; and publicly, in case of public scandal.

Whereunto may be added, for the honour of our Church's moderation, that it observes the seal of confession, as sacredly as reason or religion can possibly permit, yet forbids not the disclosure in case of murder or treason, but in those particulars leaves us entire in our obedience to the common laws of the kingdom: of which see we what our Church delivers in its one hundred and thirteenth canon: "If any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the minister, for the unburthening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him, we do straightly charge and admonish the said minister that he do not at any time reveal and make known, to any person whatsoever, any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy‡ (except they be such crimes as by the law of this realm his own life may be called in question), under pain of irregularity." For, as H. Garnet (whom the Romanists will have a martyr for their sacrament of confession) confessed himself, "it is not fitting that the lives of princes should depend upon the private nicety of any man's conscience."§

And yet Suarius|| determines, "that in no case, for no end, though it was to save a whole commonwealth from a great evil, temporal or spiritual, may it be lawful to violate confession." James Binet¶ went higher: "It was better all kings should perish, than even once the seal of confession should be violated."

The "Catholic Apologist" goes higher yet: "The sacrament of confession is of such reverence among us, that we cannot disclose a secret known by it, though it were to save Christianity

* Homily of Rep., part ii. † Sozomen Eccl. Hist., l. vii., c. 16.

‡ "Cujus rigidam necessitatem quod apud vos obtinet Eccl. Ang. molliendam putavit: rem ipsam neque sustulit," &c.—*IS. Casaub.* ad *Frontod.*, part cxxix.

§ *Vide* proceedings against the traitors.

|| Suarius de pœn. disp. xxxiii., sect. 1.

¶ *IS. Casaub.* ad *Frontod.*, part cxi.

itself." Nay, the "Apology for Garnet"* hath a notable fetch to bring in all the gunpowder conspirators as martyrs; for, saith he, "it is the common opinion of Catholics that all who receive the matter from the confessor (by the consent of the penitent) are bound by religion of secrecy." But what abuse of confession is this, to hold those martyrs who confessed a wickedness they were resolved to commit; and their priests absolved them from a treason they were then sworn to undertake!

The discipline of our Church doth by no means exclude the use of external penance, and in its judgment is more right than the Church of Rome. To enforce both inward and outward penance, our Church hath a special office of commination upon solemn occasions to be used. And for some scandalous sins (when notorious) solemn penance is, by a special canon, required for the humiliation and compunction of the sinner, for the example of others, and for the edification of the Church,† the commutation of which (for very good reasons requiring) the Church hath taken care sometime to moderate; but the commutations allowed by our Church are sincerely designed for the ends of charity and religion, and the consideration of piety, but are not taxed in a penitentiary table, as it were to invite men to sin. The godly discipline of the primitive Church, of open penance for the conviction of notorious offenders, the Church of England wisheth may be restored again: but "the satisfaction that God requires of us (saith the Homily of Repentance) is that we cease from evil, and do good; and if we have done any man wrong, to endeavour ourselves to make him true amends to the uttermost of our power, following in this the example of Zaccheus," &c.

Nevertheless, the penances in the Church of Rome, which there are called satisfactions, and are counted deletery of sin and meritorious of pardon, our Church doth account no otherwise than superstitious.

The absolution of the priest hath its due honour and use in our Church, although it be made no part of any sacrament of penance. And that the moderation of our Church may be more perceived, observe, first, that our Church ascribeth not the power of remission of sin to any but to God only; secondly, it constantly holds that faith and true repentance are the necessary conditions of receiving the benefit of remission of sin; thirdly, it asserts, what is most true, that the ministers of the Church have a special power and commission, which other believers have not, authoritatively to declare this absolution and

* Eud. Jo. Apol. pro Garnetto, p. 327.

† *Vide Artic. pro clero.*

remission of sin, for the benefit and consolation of true penitency which, if duly dispensed, cannot but have a real effect from the very promise of Christ; fourthly, this penitence our Church makes not a new sacrament (as doth the Church of Rome), but a means of returning to the grace of God bestowed in baptism: "They which in act or deed sin after baptism (saith our Homily), when they turn to God unfeignedly, they are likewise washed by this sacrifice from their sins."

The rare temper and proportion, which the Church of England useth in commensurating the forms of absolution to the degrees of preparation and necessity, is to be observed—that at the beginning of morning and evening prayer, after a general confession, the form of absolution is in general declarative, and by way of proposition; in the office of communion it is by way of intercession. In the visitation of the sick, when it is supposed and enjoined that the penitent shall disburthen himself of the clamorous loads on his conscience, the Church prescribes a medicinal form, by way of delegate authority: therefore, saith the Bishop of Down, "It is the excellent temper of the Church so to prescribe her forms of absolution as to show them to be the results of the whole priestly office." All which forms, in sense and virtue, are the same.

For visitation of the sick, such is the care of our Church, that by its canon, "when a person is dangerously sick in any parish, the minister or curate (having knowledge thereof) shall resort unto him or her (if the disease be not known, or probably suspected to be infectious), to instruct and comfort them in their distress, according to the order of the Common Prayer-book (if he be no preacher); or if he be a preacher, then as he shall think most needful and convenient." And so in the rubric it is said, "the minister may use that, or the like exhortation." From both which passages—although we are not greedy of liberty—yet for good reasons, and the occasional necessity of accommodating our addresses in that kind to the particular cases of persons, we observe the moderation of our Church, in complying accurately with all the necessities of her people. And further we note from that canon, that although in prudence, and kindness, and Christian duty, the minister may, and ought, in many cases, to go of his own accord, to visit his charge especially; yet we cannot say that the Church doth bind always her minister thereunto, till he be certified, according to the words of St. James, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church," &c. Yet because in a matter of such concern the Church would not have its ministers use such a caprice, as to stand upon their

niceties in so serious and momentous a matter, nor the people so forgetful of their own interest as to neglect their part therein, therefore (so punctual is our Church, and moderate according to reason) the canon only saith, "the minister, having knowledge thereof, shall resort," &c.

Excellent was the injunction of King Edward VI., 1547, and Queen Elizabeth, sec. 17, 1559, "That the damnable vice of despair may clearly be taken away, and firm belief and steadfast hope surely conceived of all their parishioners being in any danger, the parsons, vicars, and curates, shall learn, and have in readiness, such comfortable places and sentences of Scripture as do set forth the mercy and goodness of Almighty God toward all penitent and believing persons, that they may at all times (when necessity requires) promptly comfort their flock with the lively word of God, which is the only stay of man's conscience." Wherefore certainly it ought to be the special study of every minister of God to provide himself, that he may be ready and dexterous to assist such as desire a spiritual guide and counsellor at so needful a time.

The order of the Church for the visitation of the sick, and preparing those of her communion for death, is the same with that of the Church ever since the primitive times, which was prayer and absolution, and the holy viaticum of the body and blood of Christ, which we retain: "And I pray (saith Spalatensis) what proper and peculiar effect can extreme unction have on any faithful man for the occasion of passing from this mortal life to a glorious immortality, which may not be entirely obtained by faith and repentance, and the holy eucharist, and alms, and prayer, especially the public prayer and absolution of the Church?" These, and no other, the ancient fathers and councils mention, as having the common and abiding promise of God, which extreme unction hath not; and, as it was used in and about the time that St. James speaks of "anointing the sick with oil in the name of the Lord," was a miraculous gift of healing, the effect of which was their recovery, as it follows, "and the Lord shall raise him up." Different from which also is the practice of the Church of Rome, never or rarely anointing any with exorcised oil on the five organs of their senses till they are past all hopes of recovery.

From which practice the people of this nation was brought off by degrees. For in the first book of King Edward VI., the rubric was thus: "If the sick person desire to be anointed, then shall the priest anoint them on the forehead or breast, only making the sign of the cross, saying, 'As with this visible

oil thy body outwardly is anointed, so God grant that thy soul," &c.*

Unto which ceremonies of chrisin in baptism and extreme unction (as it was then here in use) those repeated words of Calvin may appear particularly to refer, and not generally to other constitutions among us: "In the English Liturgy (saith he) I see there hath been many tolerable trifles."† Which two words, as conscious that they were very captious and severe if too generally taken, therefore he softens them in the next immediate words by an apology: "By which (saith he) I mean there hath not been that purity which might be wished." What he particularly meant, I suppose, is expressed in another epistle to the English Protector: "There are other things (saith he)‡ perhaps not presently to be condemned, but yet of that sort as cannot be excused," viz., chrisin in baptism, and the ceremony of unction; which only if he referred to, how often have his severer followers been mistaken.

In reference to the burial of the dead, the moderation of the Church is such, it concerns itself but as far as Christian religion doth: first,§ confirming all natural and civil law herein; providing that Christian sepulture be decent, honourable, and religious, as becomes a Church in which the resurrection of the body is asserted: our Church well remembering that the Christian religion did obtain by no means more than by the care the primitive Christians had of the burial of their dead.

Wherefore Julian, who was a great bigot to Gentilism, in an epistle to his Gentile high priest, recommends the practice of the same things amongst them by which the Christian religion got so much ground, which was by the gravity of the Christians' deportment, by their kindness to strangers, and by their care of burial. And though, indeed, the ecclesiastical solemnity, by the use of the Liturgy, is forbid at the burial of such as die unbaptized,|| or excommunicated, or have laid violent hands on

* *Vide* "Alliance of Divine Offices," p. 182.

† "In Anglic. Liturgiâ qualem describitis multas video fuisse tolerabiles ineptias, his duobus verbis experimo non fuisse eam puritatem," &c.—*Anglis Francofur.*, ep. 200.

‡ "Sunt et alia non proinde damnanda fortasse, sed tamen ejusmodi ut excusari non possunt, viz., crisma et unctionis ceremonia."—*Prot. Angl.*, ep. 87.

§ Can. 48, 1603. "De Donatistis qui Catholicorum corpora sepeliri vetabant."—*Vide Optat. Milev.* l. vi.

"Quibus constat quod semel in anno non susceperint sacramenta confessionis eccles. sepultura negatur."—*Rit. Rom. de Exeq.*

|| *Vide Rubric.*

themselves, the same is but in pursuance of the chief design of the burial office, viz., the benefit of the living,* that all may avoid whatsoever may deprive them of such an honourable sign of being esteemed to have died in communion with the Church.

In our Church, Christian burial is now such a dumb show, as is the practice of a shameful company of people in this realm who have excommunicated themselves while they live, and therefore it is the less matter though they keep by themselves when they are dead. In our burial office, Christian people may be at once comforted and admonished. And because the whole Church, militant and triumphant, is united in one society, under one supreme Head—because also at death the happiness of the best is but incomplete, therefore, in our Church, we beseech “God, of his great goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of his elect, and to hasten his kingdom, that we, with all those, &c., may have our perfect consummation and bliss,” &c. Here the moderation of our Church stops, and leaves the Romanists in their extremes. Although the bodies of the dead are often laid up in our churches according to the custom of the country, it is without any superstition required or allowed: the bodies and coffins of the dead are not sprinkled with holy water† (as if it was to keep the evil spirit from interrupting the worms). We attribute no effect to the garments we are buried in, which those friars do who persuade people to die and be buried in their habits, for the redemption of their souls out of purgatory. There are not among us any masses for the dead, vigils, trentals, adoring the bones of saints, worshipping their relics, which, with the like, the Articles of King Edward VI. called blind devotion; there is not consecrating and reconciling churchyards with so many ceremonies and opinion of efficacy and necessity, as in the Church of Rome.‡

The bells which sound at funerals among us are not appointed for any superstition,§ or to drive away spirits from the grave; and because by death all are made equal, therefore all have the same office for burial, all amongst us are deposited in the same general place of the earth;|| in other circumstances, respect and

* “Ut hoc pacto à peccato retrahantur.”—*Grot. de jure*, b. c. 19.

† “Parochus antequam Cadaver efferatur illud aspergit aquâ benedictâ.”—*Rit. Ro. de Exeq.*

‡ *Vide* Form of Consecration of Churches. Bishop Sparrow’s Collect. 1675.

§ Centum gravam, 50.

|| “Redditur Terræ Corpus et ita locatum quasi operimento Matris obducitur.”—*Cic. de leg.*, l. ii.

distinction is permitted, according to the custom of the country, and the condition of the person deceased.

The moderation of our Church is the same with that of the Christian religion, as it also leaves all nations to their proper usages, and doth not oppose any civil laws, or indifferent customs, of this or any other kingdom.

And it is observable that God himself, though he forbade the people of Israel* to “cut themselves, or make any baldness upon themselves, for the dead, or printing any marks upon themselves,” which were the practices of that idolatrous nation; yet, in such ancient customs, they had those which were innocent: referring to the manner of their burial, were permitted the same, notwithstanding they had them from the Egyptians and other heathen nations: whereunto even also the burial of our blessed Lord Jesus was conformable, of which it is recorded,† “They took the body of Jesus and wound it in linen, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury; among whom (as hath been noted‡) there was a kind of law that they should use no other grave-clothes.” Notwithstanding it is all one§ to our bodies, whether they are deposited in linen or in woollen, with spices or without, in the earth or in any other element; whether we lie in St. Innocent’s churchyard, where the bodies soon consume, or in the sands of Egypt, where they last longer, or under the moles of Adrianus. And if the minds of some seem uneasy in relation to one way of burial more than another, it convinceth us how great tyrants custom and imagination are; and perhaps in no instance can it be confirmed more than in the late alteration referring to burial, concerning which St. Austin’s comment might be of use: “The evangelist (saith he) doth seem to me not in vain to have said ‘as the manner of the Jews is to bury;’ for so, unless I am deceived, he admonisheth in such offices of piety which are exhibited in the dead, the custom of every nation is to be observed.”||

Wherefore our Church of England always leaves the government of the kingdom to have its reasons to itself in what it appoints, instructing her sons also, how little soever the matters are, from thence to receive the greater honour of obedience.

And because, at so solemn a providence as is the death of our

* Lev. xix. 28; Deut. xiv. 1.

† John xix. 40.

‡ Bishop Pearson on the Creed, notes on Expos., art. iv.

§ “Tabésne Cadavera solvat,

Aut rogos aut refert.

“Capit omnia tellus

Qua genuit, cœlo tegitur qui non habit urnam.”

|| St. Aug. de Doct. Chr., l. iii. *Vide* De Civita. Dei., l. i., c. 13.

friends, if some well-disposed persons, finding their minds then more lifted up to the desires of heaven, and become more mortified to the world, would take an opportunity of seriously commemorating the death of our Lord, who by death overcame Death, and opened the gate of heaven to all believers.

Therefore there is a brief peculiar appointment for the celebration of the holy supper of the Lord at funerals,* appointed 1560, with a collect, epistle, and gospel, which bears a part of the reformed Liturgy, which here is taken notice of, as a proof how refined every part thereof is from Romish superstition.

The like instance of inoffensive moderation may be the public office appointed by Queen Elizabeth, for the commemoration of benefactors, which is used in our colleges and universities; which doth testify what worthy care we have of the memory of the deserving, though deceased; and also doth show how much purged these honourable offices are from superstition.

* *Peculiariorum quædam in funebribus, &c., reign Eliz. Vide Bishop Sparrow's Collections.*

VISITATION AND BURIAL SERVICES.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM FALKNER, D.D.

THE communion of the sick is very allowable, because the dying state may need the best supports of Christian faith, the highest encouragements of divine grace, and the chief means to strengthen hope, all which is included in this ordinance of the Lord's supper; it being a pledge and assurance, yea, a tender from Christ, of mercy and forgiveness to them who truly repent and believe. And though the celebrating this holy communion in private places standeth condemned in ordinary cases by the ancient canons, yet, in this extraordinary case, sick or dying persons were ordinarily allowed to receive it, and the Council of Nice doth well approve of the sick person's desire thereof. And though it be sufficiently proved, by Albaspinus, that the viaticum frequently given to dying penitents did not always include the eucharist, yet it is manifest that they did frequently partake thereof, as is expressed not only in the canons of the fourth Council of Carthage, but in the more ancient testimony of Dionysius Alexandrinus.

Divers Protestant Churches, besides our own, have retained the use thereof; and amongst them the Bohemian, the Polonian, with the consent of the ministry of the three several confessions, and that of Strasburg, as it was in Bucer's time. And though this was not practised at Geneva, yet Calvin did, in several places, and even towards the end of his life, testify his allowance thereof, and also that there were divers weighty causes which constrained him to judge that it ought not to be denied.

But against this it is objected, that some persons, who have led vicious lives, may earnestly desire the communion in their sickness, and yet not be truly penitent for their sins, and therefore cannot worthily partake of these holy mysteries. To which I answer, that, even in this case Christian charity must incline to the more favourable part; and since man hath no certain evidences to judge of sincere repentance, the infallible discerning thereof must be reserved to the judgment of God. And if this person hath lived vainly and exorbitantly, the minister may acquaint him with the nature (if need be) of true faith and repentance, and the necessity thereof, both to a dying man and

to a communicant; and if he appear, so far as is in him, desirous to practice and exercise those Christian graces, and to obtain the help of Jesus Christ and his grace, to deny him this sacrament, would be to deny him a testimony, in God's name, that he will upon these conditions bestow grace and remission of sins, and to shut up the means of grace and remission from a sinner who seeketh after it; and certainly it cannot agree with the minister's office to reject those persons, who, in a dying state, declare they would come to Christ. And in the strict times of primitive discipline, he was thought worthy to be deposed from the ministry who either rejected or did not receive any sinner upon his return; and a peculiar charity towards dying persons was expressed in divers ancient customs.

In the office for burial, several expressions are misliked, as being thought unmeet to be spoken of every person dying in the Church's communion; where the first expression to be considered is, "that Almighty God, of his great mercy, hath taken to himself the soul of the person departed," when yet we cannot assert that every person dying in our communion is eternally saved. I answer, besides what may be said of the judgment of charity, the wise man telleth us that the "spirits of dying men return to God who gave them;" that is, to be disposed of according to his righteousness; and our Church in this place acknowledgeth the mercy of God, through the grace of Christ, who now hath the keys of hell and death, that dying persons do not forthwith go into the power of the devil, who hath the power of death, but do immediately go into the hands of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, to be disposed of by him according to the promises and conditions of the Gospel covenant. This is that which all Christians must acknowledge to flow from the great mercy of God towards man; and that this is the sense intended in this place, I am induced to believe, because in the ancient offices of burial they magnified the divine power, whereby the unjust and tyrannous power of the devil was overcome, and our Lord receiveth us unto his peculiar and most righteous judgment. Yet even this sense doth express a general and firm confidence of the future happy state of all them who heartily embrace the Christian faith and life, as being consequent upon the gracious mediation and sovereign dominion of Jesus our Saviour.

And whereas this office calleth the deceased person "our brother," and "our dear brother," these phrases may undoubtedly be applied to every person who, professing Christianity, dieth in the Church's communion; and that extensive sense of those words is sufficiently warranted by the use thereof in Scrip-

ture, when it commands us to “love our brother,” not to “put a stumbling-block before our brother,” not to “defraud our brother,” to “forgive our brother;” and when it speaketh of the “brother that walketh disorderly,” and of “admonishing him as a brother,” and “of thy brother trespassing against thee,” and “if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother,” and “if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator;” from which place St. Chrysostom observeth, that every Christian man baptized by the laver of regeneration is there called a brother. Tertullian, in a general sense as they are men, alloweth even the heathen to be accounted brethren, though they be *mali fratres*, evil brethren; but in a more special sense he so esteemeth of all Christians, who acknowledge one God the Father; and much to the same purpose writeth Eusebius. And Cyril telleth all those who gave up their names to Christianity, that they become the sons and daughters of one mother. So that this manner of expression in this office is the same which the Scriptures and the ancient Fathers have ordinarily used, or it is approved by those writings which only are of divine authority, and by those which are in the Church of greatest human authority.

The expression of his being a dear brother doth only include a respect suitable to a brotherly relation, and expresseth that the members of the Church of Christ had real desires of the welfare of such persons as are received into its communion.

That clause in committing the body to the ground, “In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life,” doth so evidently express the faith and hope of the general resurrection, wherein all Christians are concerned—when, as it followeth, “he shall change our vile bodies, and made them like to his glorious body”—that it cannot reasonably be understood with a particular restriction to the party deceased; but it declareth that, while this object of mortality is before our eyes, the faith of the resurrection to life remaineth fixed upon our hearts.

When we give thanks to God that he hath “delivered this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world,” it must be considered that the ending all troubles and miseries is an act of God’s mercy, and ought to be so acknowledged, though some men, by their own neglect of the Christian life, deprive themselves of the benefits thereof; as the goodness of God in his patience ought to be owned, though some aggravate their own misery by the misimprovement thereof. And some regard may be had, in this expression, to the Christian hope of a future estate, which is the more quickened by every instance of our present frailty. And both this and the former expressions may be used with a particular confidence of the eternal bliss of any

holy person deceased, and with the exercise of the judgment of charity in its proper object.

There is only one expression in the latter prayer which includeth particularly our favourable thoughts of the person departed, when we pray that “we may rest in him, as our hope is this our brother doth.” In the use of which phrase we may well express different degrees of hope, according to the different evidences of piety in several distinct persons. But even where men were vicious in their lives, there may be, in ordinary cases, some degree of hope, that they, knowing and professing the truth, might at last become truly penitent, though we have no evidence thereof. For some degree of hope doth not include so much as the judgment of charity, and it may be exercised wherever we cannot certainly determine the contrary. Yet if there should be any such extraordinary case where not so much as any degree of hope can be admitted, it is far more desirable that this expression should be omitted in that singular case alone—which would be very rarely found—than that all ordinary expressions of the hopefulness of them who depart this life, in communion with so excellent a Church as this is, should be expunged and disclaimed. For as this would be an undertaking extremely groundless and deeply uncharitable, so the very sound thereof may be enough to affright Pagans from Christianity, and Papists from the Reformation, if ourselves did not allow ordinarily any hopes of the happy estate of the members of our Church.

Yet that this may not be misunderstood and misimproved, when it is applied to such persons, who have been wanting in the practice of due strictness of Christian life, and too much swerved from the holy rules and doctrines delivered in the Gospel, and received by our Church, we ought to consider that this expression of hope is no encouragement to any others to be guilty of the like neglects. For the bare expression of hope is below any degree of evidence, and only expresseth that our judgments and understandings cannot conclude it absolutely certain that he was finally impenitent, though his state may appear extremely hazardous. And whosoever liveth wickedly, and dieth without sufficient repentance—of which God can certainly judge where man cannot—it will be no advantage to him in the other world that his name was mentioned in the Church with some degree of hope; or, as the author of the Constitutions expresseth it, *Ἀσεβούς τελευτῶντας ἑδὲν ὠφελεσι μνείας*. And the state of such a person is not the less miserable, because frail men are not endued with that infallible judgment, whereby they can conclude it utterly desperate.

The charity of the ancient Christian Church, in expressing

their hope of them who died in their communion, is very manifest; and it is a great mistake which some have entertained, that, through the strictness of their discipline, no persons had their names honourably mentioned by the Church, with hopes of their future happiness, but such who had lived altogether free from any apparent sinfulness of life, or had given severe testimonies of a strict amendment. Indeed, some rigorous canons, neither of general practice nor of long continuance in the Church, would not allow some offenders, whatsoever repentance they manifested, to be reconciled to the Church, or admitted to its communion throughout their whole life, no, nor at the hour of death; and yet these canons have been conceived only to make them perpetual *pœnitentes*, so that after their death their oblations were received; or they, all who were admitted as such penitents, were then owned among them who had relation to the Church, and of whom it had hope. But amongst the ordinary rules of primitive discipline, these were generally admitted. First, that whosoever came under any censure of the Church, whatsoever his crime was, he might, upon his supplication, be admitted to be one of the *pœnitentes*, or to be under the rules of penance; and the not admitting him hereto was accounted an heinous crime, because *non fas est ecclesiam pulsantibus claudi*. Secondly, that if any of these *pœnitentes* were under dangerous sickness, or approaching death, it was requisite they should be then admitted to the peace of the Church and its communion. Thirdly, that even they, who, being under censure, did only in the time of dangerous sickness desire to be admitted penitents, might thereupon forthwith be both admitted penitents, and receive reconciliation and communion. This is a consequent from the two former, and is included in the canon of Ancyra now mentioned, and is manifest by divers other particular testimonies, and it was grounded upon this reason, "Because (as Leo expresseth it) we cannot limit the times nor determine the measures of God's mercy." Fourthly, that all who were so received into the Church, with others who died in its communion, and even penitents who died without the opportunity of obtaining disciplinary reconciliation, had the memories of their names recommended in the Church's prayers, as persons of whom it hoped well; which is, I suppose, intended by *μεταδέστω τῆς προσφορᾶς* in the Council of Nice, though it be otherwise understood by the Greek canonists, and in Albaspinus's explication.

NOTES.

ON THE CEREMONIES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

THE earliest writer who makes any reference to the rites and ceremonies of the ancient Church, in connection with public prayer and psalmody, is Tertullian. (*a*) Their rules relating to this matter, so far as they have come down to us, may be reduced to the following heads.

The custom of standing at prayer, in general, is peculiar to the East. No rule respecting posture is laid down in Scripture ; but the examples recorded in Gen. xviii. 22 ; xix. 27 ; 2 Chron. xx. 13 ; 1 Sam. i. 26 ; Job xxx. 20, compared with Luke xviii. 11, 13 ; Matt. vi. 5, show that the Jews for the most part prayed standing—a fact which is illustrated by the more modern practice of that people, and the testimony of rabbinical writers. Such is, indeed, the custom of other oriental nations also. Our Saviour recognized it, at least, in saying to his disciples, “When ye stand praying ;” and hence Cyprian observes that we comply with the will of our Lord, “*quando stamus ad orationem*”—when we stand at prayer. (*b*) And from the Liturgy in the “Apostolical Constitutions,” as well as from those of Basil and Chrysostom, it plainly appears that, during the early centuries of Christianity, standing at prayer was the rule, and kneeling the exception.

We learn, from Tertullian and other early writers, that it was the practice of the Church in their times not to kneel at prayer on Sundays, and during the interval between Easter and Whitsuntide ; and it was enacted by the Council of Nicæa, that on those occasions prayer should always be offered by members of the Church in a standing posture, and no other. (*c*)

According to Origen, it was deemed proper to stretch forth the hands, and to raise the eyes in prayer, in order that the gestures of the body may indicate the elevation of the soul to God, except in cases of necessity. But kneeling was considered necessary when prayer was made for forgiveness of sin. (*d*) These remarks, however, are applied by that author to private prayer.

The author of the treatise entitled “*Quæstiones et Responsiones ad Orthodoxos*” (which was formerly attributed to Justin Martyr, but is evidently of a much later date), explains the custom of abstaining from kneeling on Sundays as emblematic of our Lord’s resurrection from the dead, and the forgiveness of sins : he supposes the custom to have descended from the apostles’ age, and appeals to the testimony of Irenæus, in his “*Treatise on the Paschal Feast*.” Epiphanius, Jerome, and Augustine, agree with him in this view of the matter ; but Basil the Great, thinking the custom not sufficiently explained by an allusion to the resurrection, and that such allusion was not generally understood

(*a*) De Orat., c. 11-23. (*b*) Conf. Groti. Annotat. ad Matt. vi. 5.

(*c*) Tertull. de Corona Mil., c. 3 ; Conc. Nicæn., A.D. 325, c. 20.

(*d*) De Orat., c. 31.

interpreted it as being at the same time a sign of a Christian's hope and expectation of another world. (*e*)

Standing and kneeling appear to have been practised indifferently in public worship, except at the times, and on the occasions, before mentioned.

Bowing of the head, and especially bowing of the whole body, may be regarded as an intermediate posture between standing and kneeling. In the "Apostolical Constitutions" the catechumens are represented sometimes as kneeling down, sometimes as standing up, sometimes as bowing themselves. And mention is made of bowing the head in the baptism of adults; and generally in cases of intercession and benediction. (*f*)

Prostration on the ground is sometimes spoken of; not, however, as a usual practice, but only on particular occasions, and as a sign of deep and extraordinary humiliation. (*g*)

Ecclesiastical writers make mention also of the custom of stretching out the arms in the form of a cross during prayer, in memory of the crucifixion of our blessed Lord. (*h*)

The folding of the hands in prayer is explained by Pope Nicholas I. (*i*) as a token that Christians are the servants of Jesus Christ, and, as it were, his captives and prisoners. But there is no allusion to this custom in any ancient writer.

The early Church, in compliance with the injunctions of the apostle, in 1 Cor. xi., made it a rule that men should pray with the head uncovered, but women with it covered. In the former case, the custom appears to have been regarded as a token of subjection to Christ, and humble dependence upon him; and, in the latter, it was, perhaps, chiefly intended as a provision in favour of female modesty and decorum. (*k*)

It appears that there was a daily celebration of divine worship in the time of Cyprian; and it has been supposed that the practice of offering public prayer every morning and evening was established during the third century. The order of the daily morning and evening services, as they undoubtedly obtained in the fourth century, was as follows:—The morning service began with the sixty-third Psalm; this was followed by prayers for the catechumens, energumens, competentes, and penitents; for the faithful, the peace of the world, and the state of the Church; a bidding prayer for preservation during the ensuing day; a commendatory prayer, or thanksgiving, offered by the bishop; and his benediction of the assembly before its dismissal by the deacon. The even-

(*e*) De Spirit. Sanct., c. 27. (*f*) Chrysost. Hom., 28, 29.

(*g*) Socrat. Hist. Eccl., lib. iii., c. 13, 37; Theodoret. Hist. Eccl., v. 18, 19.

(*h*) Origen. De Orat., c. 20; Chrysost. in Ps. 140; Euseb. Vit. Constant., lib. iv., c. 15.

(*i*) Respons. ad Bulgaros.

(*k*) Tertull. De Virginibus Velandis, c. 7-17; Apolog., c. 30; Chrysostom in 1 Ep. ad Corinth. Hom., 26.

ing service corresponded to that of the morning, *mutatis mutandis*. The Psalm appointed for the opening of the service was the hundred and forty-first. In some churches the Lord's Prayer was used at the conclusion of the morning and evening daily service.—*Riddle's Christian Antiquities*.

PENANCE.

Penance related only to actual members of the Church, *i. e.*, to such as had received baptism and the Lord's supper. No Jew or heathen could do penance; nor were even catechumens admitted to penance, because they were not regarded, in strictness, as members of the Church.

Penance was not a temporal, but purely spiritual, penalty. It had to do only with the ecclesiastical relations, and not at all with the civil capacity, of the persons on whom it was imposed.

No one was compelled to do penance; indeed, so far from being commanded or arbitrarily imposed, penance was something to be sought as a favour. And this, perhaps, may be considered as constituting the leading difference between this kind of punishment and every other.

Usually, in the ancient Church, no one was permitted to do penance more than once. Repetitions of penance did sometimes occur, but they were exceptions to the general rule.

The mode and duration of penance were regulated according to the nature and degree of the crime of which the offender had been guilty. In this respect, many exceptions to general rules were made, according to circumstances.

In many cases, the performance of penance was extended to the whole term of the penitent's life. But this sentence was subject to many mitigations.

The penitents were divided into several classes; which, though differing according to time and place, were carefully distinguished by the early Church.

The performance of penance restored an offender to the communion of the Church. But this restoration was not complete and full, at least, in respect of the clergy; that is to say, the received penitent was not regarded as equal, in all circumstances, to members who had never offended.

The severity of this institution sometimes became excessive and injurious, in many respects, to the true interests of the Church; but, on the whole, it was productive of vast and overwhelming advantages. The exercise of penance, during times of persecution and apostasy, was especially laudable and useful.

In order to examine this subject closely, we must give a separate consideration to the following points:—

1. The origin and antiquity of penance.
2. Its objects; or, the offences for which it was imposed.
3. The different classes of penitents.
4. The duties of penitents, and penalties imposed on them; or, the different kinds and degrees of penance.

5. The restoration or re-admission of penitents into the Church.

1. *The origin and antiquity of Penance.*—Penance in the Christian Church may be regarded as an imitation, or rather a continuation, of an institution belonging to the Jewish synagogue. It was, in fact, an appendage of the practice of excommunication, or the system of excluding offenders from religious privileges, which descended from the synagogue to the Christian Church. The chief difference between Jewish and Christian excommunication consisted in the circumstance that the former extended in its consequence to the affairs of civil life, whereas the latter was strictly confined to ecclesiastical relations. Neither the spirit of early ecclesiastical regulations, nor the situation and constitution of the Church during the first three centuries, admitted of any intermingling or confounding of civil and religious privileges or penalties.

Excommunication, in the Christian Church, consisted at first simply in the exclusion of the offender from the Lord's supper, and the agapæ or love-feasts; and hence the word excommunication, *i. e.*, separation from communion. This practice was founded upon the words of the apostle, 1 Cor. v. 11, "With such an one, no not to eat"—a passage which does not refer to common meals, and the ordinary intercourse of life, but to the religious agapæ or other solemnities, as appears from the context, and from a comparison with 1 Cor. x. 16-18; xi. 30-34.

2. *Of the objects of Penance; or, the offences with which it was concerned.*—As public penance was prescribed only to persons who had been excommunicated, and as its immediate end was, *not* the forgiveness of the offender by Almighty God, but his reconciliation with the Church, and restoration to spiritual privileges in its communion, it is evident that the system would be applied to no other than open and scandalous offences. It was an old maxim "*De occultis non judicat ecclesia*"—The Church does not take cognizance of things in secret;" and ancient writers say expressly that the Church pardons only wrongs committed against herself, as such, but refers the forgiveness of all sins to God. It was reserved for later times to overlook this important distinction, and to claim for the Church, in any sense, the power of forgiving sins.

3. *Different classes of Penitents.*—The writings of Tertullian and Cyprian present no trace of a division of penitents into several classes; and hence it may, perhaps, be not too much to infer, that no such classification existed in their time, it being hardly probable that writers who treat so copiously of penitence would have omitted to notice such an arrangement, if it had really existed in the Church.

4. *Of the duties and burdens imposed upon Penitents; or, of the different kinds and degrees of Penance.*—It must be carefully remembered that penance was throughout a voluntary act on the part of those who submitted to it, and by no means compulsory. And so anxious was the primitive Church to preserve this voluntary character of penance, that it was held unlawful even to exhort or invite any one to submit to this kind of discipline. It was required that the offender should seek it as a favour, and should supplicate for admission among the penitents. But although an offending member was at liberty either

to return into the Church, by doing penance or not, yet he was not at liberty to choose the course or method of penance to be undergone, if he once determined to seek restoration. No one could even take his station among the penitents, without having received permission upon application made to the bishop or presbyter. The acts of the first class of penitents may, perhaps, be regarded as a formal and continual supplication of this kind.

5. *Re-admission of Penitents into the Church.*—In early times, although penance and absolution were not reckoned among the sacraments, yet the restoration of penitents was a solemn and public act of the Church, and was conducted with a view to the edification of the whole body, as well as to the benefit of the individual penitents. It was enacted, that the absolution should be granted only by the bishop who had pronounced the sentence of excommunication, or his successor, and this rule was strictly enforced by several councils ;(*l*) any bishop who should absolve a penitent belonging to another diocese being liable to severe censure, or even to deposition, for this irregular proceeding.(*m*) And on this account the names of excommunicated persons were published in lists circulated among neighbouring dioceses.(*n*)—*Riddle's Christian Antiquities.*

BURIAL SERVICE.

I will now proceed to defend (or rather to explain, for they require no defence) the clauses which have been excepted against in the form of burial prescribed by the Church of England. Now, first, she is accused of testifying “a sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life,” of every notorious sinner who may be buried in her communion ; but it will be found upon examination that she testifies no such thing : the “resurrection of the body” being a fundamental article of the Christian faith, the Church of England very properly considers it her duty to acknowledge and declare her stedfast belief in that doctrine, whenever she lays the body of any Christian in the grave—that is, her “sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life ;” in these words, however, let it be observed, she by no means expresses “a sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life” of every one buried by her ministers, that they will rise again to joy and felicity ; nor does she make any profession of the futurc estate of the person then interred : it is not *his* or *her* resurrection, but “*the* resurrection,” that is expressed in her burial service : nor does it proceed to mention the “change of *his* or *her* body” in the *singular* number, but of “*our* vile body,” which comprehends the bodies of Christians in general.—*Bassnett Mills.*

(*l*) Conc. Illiberit., c. 53 ; Arelat., i., c. 16, 17 ; Nic., c. 5 ; Sardic., c. 13.

(*m*) Conc. Cæsaraug., c. 5 ; Carthag., ii., c. 7.

(*n*) Conc. Tolet., i., c. 11 ; Theodoret. Hist. Eccl., lib. iv., c. 9 ; Augustin. Contra Petil., lib. iii., c. 38.

PREFACE.

THE topic which presents, not the greatest, but yet the most universal interest in the discipline of the Anglican Church, is her connection, as it is called, with the State—in other words, *HER NATIONALITY*. This may be considered with reference, first, to its necessity; secondly, to its nature: and in this Preface we shall touch only and briefly upon the latter. It consists, then, in three things—first, that Church membership is essential to certain high offices, as sovereign, chancellor, &c.; secondly, in the admission of the bishops to the House of Peers; and thirdly, in certain revenues, as tithes and church-rates, paid for the support of religious officials and edifices. Let it be remembered, that as it is the bounden duty of every government to provide religious instruction, at all events, to the poor, who cannot pay for it themselves; so it must for this purpose make choice of some one form of Christianity, in order to avoid diversities, nay, contrarieties of teaching. This being the case, and the government having thus recognized the importance of Christianity in general, and the correctness of that form in particular which it had selected, it appears evidently the duty of that same government to provide for its continuance; and this can only be done by securing chief magistrates bound by law to profess and support it. But in England we have not only all this reasoning, but one which must weigh even stronger, viz., that the very existence of the government is in no very indirect way involved in it. Once lay low the Church, and royalty must soon follow. The various religious sects would for a time struggle fiercely among themselves, but in the end Popery would prevail, and religious despotism would succeed to religious anarchy.

But we proceed to notice the second point of the connection, viz., the admission of the bishops to the House of Peers. This is merely an act of justice to the great body of the clergy, none of whom are permitted to sit in the Lower House, and who are the *only* body thus excluded. A dissenting teacher may obtain a seat there, and may speak as long as he pleases; and as often

as he pleases, in favour of any measure calculated to lower and injure the Church. Any professional or mercantile constituency may be represented by a member of his own class, mercantile towns by merchants, manufacturing districts by manufacturers, agricultural counties by agriculturists. Tradesmen, surgeons, physicians, barristers, officers in the army and navy, attorneys, sons of peers, are all eligible for seats in the legislature; the clergy alone are excluded. Now their interests, *as a body*, are hardly likely to be understood by those not of their own order; and the species of information which they possess is not likely to be possessed in anything like the same degree by others. If, therefore, they were *totally* excluded from the legislature, a gross injustice would be done them, as a body, and a considerable loss sustained by the legislature itself. By admitting, however, a certain number of dignified ecclesiastics into the House of Peers, both these inconveniences are avoided; the clergy have their natural and proper representatives, and the legislature secures the aid of a body of remarkably learned, able, and pious men.

We shall not enlarge here on the benefit obviously accruing to a country from the accession to her councils of God's chief ministers, nor shall we speak of the uniformly humanizing and civilizing effect which such accession has had on the lay portion of the legislature: through it, our laws are more Christian and more just than otherwise they would have been; nor can we call that a Christian country, and ruled according to Christian laws, when those laws have had no revision by the heads, at least, of Christ's visible and Catholic Church.

We pass on, then, to consider the question of Episcopal Elections—for it is in the episcopal order mainly that we shall find the articles of union between Church and State. We have seen one point of this union in the admission of a body of ecclesiastics, viz., the bishops, to the great council of the nation: they are elevated to the Peerage, and have rank and precedence accordingly. The next point of union is, that the Crown *really* appoints the bishops; we say *really*, because though the royal choice is conveyed in the shape of a permission granted to the dean and chapter of the cathedral church to elect A. B. to be their bishop, yet if the dean and chapter refuse to elect A. B. aforesaid, they

involve themselves in all the penalties of a *premunire*. Now, as the primitive bishops were chosen by the apostles, and, after their departure, by the whole body of the clergy, it would seem that it never could fall to the sovereign to elect the chief ministers of religion, any more than to ordain priests, or administer the sacraments.

It must be borne in mind that this is a very different question from that of investiture, which agitated the Church during the pontificate of Gregory VII. *Then* the dispute was, whether a king could *make* a bishop: *now* it is, whether a king may nominate a man *to be made* a bishop;—and by the constitution of the Anglican Church, the *right* of election is expressly, by this very legal fiction, acknowledged to reside in the clergy of the province, while the right of nomination is ceded to the Crown. Consecration again is another right, but this is inalienable, and can only be exercised by bishops. Now the case may be said to stand thus—the Church cedes to the State the power of nominating her bishops; the State grants to the Church that those bishops shall be *ex-officio* legislators: thus each grants somewhat which the other had not before, and this mutual cession makes the chief part of what is called the union of Church and State.* Now it must not be forgotten that there have been effects which have followed this union, which have been anything but advantageous to the Church, while they have been the means of unlawfully enriching the State.

Our old kings called, from time to time, upon the clergy for a “benevolence,” or forced loan—let us rather say, gift. The confiscation of monasteries was a forcible taking of property, given for *religious*, and applying it to *irreligious*, purposes; as, for instance, the founding of factious families. The whole reign of Edward VI., excellent as appears to have been the character of that interesting prince, was one scene of ecclesiastical spoliation. Nor did the spirit of secular rapacity stop here; throughout

* In Ireland the sovereign’s choice is merely nominated to the dean and chapter, and the bishop is installed without any *congé d’élire*; but as the installation is performed by the dean and chapter, the newly made bishop may be said, in *one* sense, to be chosen by the clergy; yet the practice seems, and is, very unapostolic.

the reign of Elizabeth it remained without a check; and her prelates were accustomed to approach her with most confidence when they brought in their hand a part of their ecclesiastical wealth. The aged Bishop of Ely resolutely refused to surrender a part of the revenues of his see—not, indeed, that he cared for wealth, but he thought of his successors, and doubtless had yet other and higher motives for refusing. Elizabeth addressed to him a brief letter, commencing, “Proud priest,” and assuring him that “she who made him could also unmake him,” and that “she would unfrock him.” On a composition so unchristian, so unqueenly, so insolent, and so unfeminine, no comment will be needed. It is here adduced only as an instance of the *benefits conferred on the Church* by her union with the State.

But it will be said, tithes and church-rates are direct taxes imposed on the people by the State, and for the benefit of the Church. To agree to all this, would be going a little too far. Let us commence, then, by examining the church-rate question. We shall here suppose that the country is a Christian country; that the government is, therefore, bound to provide Christian instruction for all its subjects, more especially for those who cannot afford to procure it for themselves; that consequently the same government is bound to furnish proper and convenient places for meeting, in order that such instruction may be given; and also, that as a certain sanctity attaches to the instruction itself, and moreover that it involves public worship and the celebration of some most holy mysteries, those proper and convenient places should be consecrated, and ceded in perpetuity to the due performance of such solemn service. The government of our country has, however, never been called upon to do this. Here and there a church has been built by a king, still more rarely by a *parish*; but the greater part of our ecclesiastical edifices have been built by private individuals at their own cost, and all that the nation has been obliged to do has been to keep them in repair—and most deplorably has this trust been neglected. Again, the government has no funds, save those which are raised by taxation from the body of the people; and hence the more direct way to keep in repair the churches and cathedrals would have been to levy a tax for that purpose; but it was more in

accordance with the spirit of our manners to let each parish assess itself, and supply its own need : but in all cases it is but an exhibition of the same principle, that these are things for which the nation is bound to provide.

With regard to tithes, the subject is a more difficult one, because, chiefly through the example set by Henry VIII.'s proceedings, and those of his successors, the tithes of an immense number of parishes are alienated, and become the property of laymen ; so that now it cannot be said that tithes *are* a direct impost made by the State for the benefit of the Church. It must be remembered, that tithes, though granted unquestionably by the State, and so far, therefore, a gift from the people to the Lord, are not the only property of which the Church has, in a great measure, been dispossessed ; and *all*, save *tithes*, free gifts on the part of individuals. The property of cathedrals, by far the greater part of glebe lands, the endowment of all livings supported otherwise than by tithe, are obtained by gift, or by improving property already possessed ; which, as it is a gift of time, talent, and judgment, must be put down in exactly the same position. Now all *this* property, as it was not bestowed by the State, so neither has the State any right to take away any part of it, or apply it to other uses than those to which it has been ab-origine applied. If this principle were denied, it would follow that any government has the right, if it considers an union workhouse more useful than an hospital, to sequester the revenues of the hospital and apply them to the poor-house, on the plea that both were used to the purposes of humanity. Thus, when ten bishoprics were cut off at one stroke from the Irish Church, and arrangements were made to apply the proceeds of the confiscated sees to the purposes of education, an example was set, and a precedent given, of a species of legislation, by which any changes, however extensive, any confiscations, however monstrous—and that, too, of property bestowed by private individuals for specific purposes—may be carried into execution. It is, in fact, a practical declaration of a *new* principle, viz., that a government has the paramount and ultimate control of all corporate property, as well ecclesiastical as civil.

But, supposing that the union between the Church and State were henceforward to be distinguished by no unjustifiable interference on either side, still the Church would require protection in the peaceable possession of her corporate property, just as every other body, individual, or corporate is so by the State protected. The property in question is liable to all taxes and other imposts for the support of government, and has *a right* to protection in return. This, which is merely a common right enjoyed by all English subjects, is sometimes most erroneously supposed to constitute, at least, a part of the union to which we have referred, as though the State *gave* that of which she merely *secures the peaceable possession*. The mistake arises from supposing a difference to exist between corporate and individual property. All that has been said about Church property, applies also, and in the same degree, to University property; while yet more strength is added to the argument by the fact that Universities are *not*, like the Church, *national*; *they* are private seminaries, for they consist of colleges, and each of these colleges has a right to refuse admission to any student without assigning any reason, just as much as any “conductor” of a “classical, commercial, and mathematical academy.” That they have become the seminaries of our clergy, arises from a conviction, on the part of the bishops, that they supply the most suitable education to those who seek the sacred office, and not to any inherent rights in themselves; for the prelates might, of course, regularly, and do occasionally, ordain those who had never seen either Oxford or Cambridge. We have thrown these remarks together by way of introducing the subject of the “regale and pontificale,” the respective duties of king and priest, on the due consideration of which, the whole question of Establishments may be shown to depend.

C.

CAMBRIDGE.

THE REGALE AND PONTIFICALE.

BY THE RIGHT REV. WM. BEVERIDGE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH.

The king's majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England and other his dominions, unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction. Where we attribute to the king's majesty the chief government (by which titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended), we give not to our princees the ministering either of God's word or of the sacraments, the which thing the injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our queen do most plainly testify, but that only prerogative which we see to have been given always to all godly princees in holy Scriptures by God himself: that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers. (Art. xxxvii.)

IN these words we have the power of the civil magistrate asserted, and the assertion of that power explained. For here it is first asserted, that the king's majesty hath the chief government of all estates in this and the other of his dominions, both ecclesiastical and civil; and then it is added, that the power of the administering of God's word or sacraments is not by this assertion granted to the king, but that his power is still to keep itself within the limits of a civil power, though it may extend itself to ecclesiastical persons or causes.

But, for the better opening and confirming of this, we must call to mind how the most high God, the Supreme Governor of all churches and states in the world, hath been pleased, for the more orderly government of both, to settle a distinct power in each—the power of the keys in the Church, and the power of the sword in the State, answerable to the two essential parts of man, his soul and his body: for the power of the keys committed to the Church, that reacheth to the soul only, not to the body; and the power of the sword committed to the civil magistrate, that reacheth to the body only, not to the soul; but both together they have influence both upon the soul and body, or outward man. And though both these powers be united in God, the

fountain of all power, yet, when derived from Him, they are still separated from one another, so that they are not seated together in one and the same person; but the civil magistrate, to whom the power of the sword is granted, to him is the power of the keys denied; and the Church, to which the power of the keys is granted, to it is the power of the sword denied. And therefore was Peter, who had the power of keys, commanded to put up his sword; and Uziah, who had the power of the sword, punished for using the keys: so that the priest hath no power to execute any part of the king's office, neither hath the king any power to execute any part of the priest's office; but these being two distinct offices and ordinances appointed by God, he that hath the keys must use them, not the sword; and he that hath the sword must use it, and not the keys.

And hence it is that when the power of the civil magistrate was asserted to extend itself to ecclesiastical persons and causes, as well as civil, it is forthwith added, "Where we attribute to the king's majesty the chief government (by which titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended), we give not to our princes the ministering either of God's word or of the sacraments, the which thing the injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our queen do more plainly testify." In which words, we being referred to the queen's injunctions for the further explication of this particular, we must consider what is there written to this purpose; and, amongst other things, we find it there said, "And further, her majesty forbiddeth all manner of her subjects to give ear or credit to such perverse and malicious persons, which most sinisterly and maliciously labour to notify to her loving subjects, how, by the words of the same oath (*viz.*, of supremacy), it may be collected, the kings or queens of this realm, possessors of the crown, may challenge authority and power of ministry of divine offices in the Church; wherein her said subjects are much abused by such evil disposed persons. For certainly her majesty neither doth nor ever will challenge any other authority than that was challenged and lately used by the said noble kings of famous memory, King Henry VIII. and King Edward VI., which is and was of ancient time due to the imperial crown of this realm; that is, under God, to have the sovereignty and rule over all persons born within these her realms, dominions, and countries, of what estate, either ecclesiastical or temporal, soever they be, so as no other foreign power shall or ought to have any superiority over them."* And

* In the admonition annexed to Queen Elizabeth's injunctions, (p. 83, Sparrow's Coll.)

for the confirmation of this sense put upon the oath of supremacy, and so the king's sovereignty, there was a proviso also established by act of parliament to this purpose: "Provided also that the oath expressed in the same act made in the first year shall be taken and expounded in such form as is set forth in an admonition annexed to the queen's majesty's injunctions, published in the first year of her majesty's reign; that is to say, to confess and acknowledge in her majesty, her heirs and successors, none other authority than that was challenged and lately used by the noble King Henry VIII. and King Edward VI., as in the said admonition may more plainly appear."* By which we may see how vain and groundless the scandal is which is usually cast upon the oath of supremacy, as if we there acknowledged the king to have the keys as well as the sword committed to him, and that he might administer the word and sacraments in spiritual, as well as justice and judgment in secular, affairs; whereas the same power that asserted the king's supremacy, hath still denied it to extend to the exercise of any spiritual function.

But though the power of the sword and that of the keys be not seated in one and the same subject, yet it doth not follow but they may be exercised upon one and the same object; so that the selfsame person, yea, for one and the same crime, may be punished by both powers. For though they be two distinct powers, yet each of them is to be *custos utriusque tabulae*, to look to the observance and punish the breach of both tables, but still keeping themselves within their own limits. As for example, theft, treason, murder, are breaches of the second table, and therefore to be punished by the civil magistrate; yet the persons guilty of such crimes may be punished by the Church also, even excommunicated for them. So, on the other side, blasphemy, heresy, and idolatry, are breaches of the first table, and so to be punished immediately by the Church; yet they may, yea, and ought to be punished by the civil magistrate too. Neither is there any other power whereby a heretic or blasphemer can be put to death, but only by the power of the sword: and therefore it must needs be granted, that as the breaches of the second table may be punished by the power of the keys as well as by the power of the sword,† so may the breaches of the first

* Stat. of 5 Elizab., cap. i.

† "Quomodo ergo reges Domino serviunt in timore nisi ea quae contra jussa Domini fiunt religiosa severitate prohibendo, atque plectendo? Aliter enim servit quia homo est, aliter quia etiam rex est: quia homo est, ei servit vivendo fideliter, quia vero etiam rex est, servit leges justa praecipientes et contraria prohibentes convenienti vigore sanciendo. sicut servivit Hezechias lucos et templa idolorum et illa excelsa quae

table be punished by the power of the sword as well as by the power of the keys; and, if so, the power of the civil magistrate must needs reach to spiritual or ecclesiastical, as well as secular or temporal, causes, for all the first table consists of nothing else. And this, the punishing with the civil sword all manner of persons guilty of ecclesiastical as well as secular crimes, seems to be the prerogative here principally given to the king's majesty in this article, as appears in these words: "But we give to our princes only that prerogative, &c., that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers." So that the supremacy that is here given him is, that he may punish all manner of persons for all manner of crimes, whether ecclesiastical or temporal, with the civil sword.

And seeing all manner of persons and causes are thus to be subject to him, and punishable by him, it necessarily follows that he hath power and authority over them, whether ecclesiastical or civil: so that he may command ecclesiastical as well as civil persons to give obedience to ecclesiastical as well as civil laws, yea, and punish them for their disobedience. What disorders are brought into the Church, he may and ought to reform them; what needless or dangerous controversies arise in the Church, he may and ought to still them; as also he may and ought to see "*that all things be done decently and in order*:" and to that end may, either of himself or by the advice of a council, prescribe rules and canons to be observed in the external order of divine worship; so that he may call a council when he pleaseth, dismiss it when he pleaseth, and confirm their decrees and constitutions so far as himself pleaseth; so that nothing they prescribe is obligatory under any temporal penalty without his consent, though what he prescribes is obligatory without their consent. And thus King James, who was a person well acquainted with the extent of his own power. The king's supremacy, saith he, implies a power to command "obedience to be given to the word of God, by reforming religion according to his prescribed will, by assisting the spiritual power with his temporal sword, by reformation of corruption, by procuring due obedience to the Church, by judging and cutting off all frivolous questions and schisms, as Constantine did, and, finally, by making decorum to

contra præcepta Dei fuerant extracta destruendo, sicut servivit Jozias talia et ipso faciendo, sicut servivit rex Ninivitarum universam vivitatem ad placandum Dominum compellendo."—*Aug. Epist. ad Bonifac.*, 185, 19, vol. i.

be observed in all indifferent things for that purpose ; which is the only intent of the oath of supremacy.”* To which we may also add, that appeals ought to be made in all causes, ecclesiastical and civil, from all other persons, unto him, and to him only : so that it is lawful to appeal from any other unto him, but not from him to any other. And in the exercise of this his power he is to make the testimonies of God the men of his counsel, as King David did ; but is not bound to give account of his actions and exercise of his power to any person upon earth, but only to the God of heaven : and therefore may well be styled supreme governor (under God) over all persons, and in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil, within his majesty’s realms and dominions.

And hence it is that, in the primitive Church, appeals were made also, ultimately, to the civil magistrate, from all other persons whatsoever ; as evidently appears in the case of Donatus, who, having accused Cæcilian, Bishop of Carthage, of several crimes, referreth the cause to the Emperor Constantine, who, not willing to pass a final sentence upon a bishop himself, appoints other bishops to decide it, whereof the Bishop of Rome, Melchiades, was one, who, searching into the case, found Cæcilian innocent ; but Donatus appeals from them again to the emperor ; the emperor, willing to have it ended, refers it to a council at Arles, who determining it against Donatus, he appeals from them too to the emperor, until he at length put a period to it. This is that which St. Augustine relates in his [105th] epistle, where, writing to the Donatists, he saith, “ Know ye that your ancestors referred the cause of Cæcilian to the Emperor Constantine. Exact this of us, we can prove it to you ; and if we shall not prove it, do with us what ye can. But because Constantine durst not judge himself in the case of a bishop, he referred it to bishops to be discussed and ended : which also was done in Rome, Melchiades, the bishop of that city, being president, with many of his colleagues : who, when they had pronounced Cæcilian innocent, and had condemned Donatus, which had caused a schism at Carthage, your ancestors came again to the emperor, complaining of the judgment of the bishops, in which they were conquered ; for how can a wicked striver pray to those judges by whose judgment he is conquered ? But yet the most gracious emperor made other bishops again judges at Arles, a city of France ; and from them also did your ancestors appeal to the emperor himself ; until he also had taken cognizance of the cause, and had pronounced Cæcilian innocent, and them

* King James’s Apolog., p. 284 of his works.

reproachers.”* By which we may see that appeals were then made from several bishops (whereof he of Rome was one), yea, and from a whole council too, to the civil magistrate ; but when he had once decided the controversy, though they were not yet satisfied, yet they had no further to appeal, even in that ecclesiastical cause. So that the civil magistrate only having the supreme power in calling and confirming ecclesiastical synods, and unto whom appeals in ecclesiastical causes are ultimately to be made, we must needs grant that he is supreme in causes and over persons ecclesiastical as well as civil ; and, by consequence, that if our king be the supreme civil magistrate of this nation (which to deny is downright treason), he cannot but be acknowledged to be the person unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all causes doth appertain.

* “Scitote quod primi majores vestri causam Cæciliani ad imperatorem Constantinum detulerunt. Exigite hoc a nobis, probemus vobis, et si non probaverimus, facite de nobis quicquid potueritis. Sed quia Constantinus non est ausus de causa episcopi judicare, eam discutiendam atque finiendam episcopis delegavit. Quod et factum est in urbe Roma præsidente Melchiade episcopo illius ecclesiæ cum multis collegis suis. Qui cum Cæcilianum innocentem pronuntiassent, et Donatum qui schisma Carthagini fecerat, sententia percussissent, iterum vestri ad imperatorem venerunt, de judicio episcoporum, in quo victi fuerant, murmurarunt ; quomodo enim potest malus litigator laudare judices, quibus judicantibus victus est ? Interum tamen clementissimus imperator alios judices episcopos dedit apud Arelatum Galliæ civitatem ; et ab ipsis vestri ad ipsum imperatorem appellarunt ; donec etiam ipse causam cognosceret, et Cæcilianum innocentem, illos calumniosos pronuntiaret.”—*Aug. Epist. ad Donatistas*, 105, 8, p. 299, vol. ii.

THE DUTY OF THE STATE

WITH REFERENCE TO THE CHURCH.

BY THE REV. ROBERT SOUTH, D.D.

I KINGS xiii. 33, 34.

After this thing, Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places : whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

I SHALL draw forth the sense of the text into these two propositions :—

I. The surest means to strengthen, or the readiest to ruin, the civil power, is either to establish or destroy the worship of God, in the right exercise of religion.

II. The next and most effectual way to destroy religion, is to debase the teachers and dispensers of it.

Of both these in their order. For the prosecution of the former we are to show—

1. The truth of the assertion, that it is so.

2. The reason of the assertion, why and whence it is so.

1. For the truth of it, it is abundantly evinced from all records, both of divine and profane history, in which he that runs may read the ruin of the State in the destruction of the Church ; and that not only portended by it, as its sign, but also inferred from it, as its cause.

2. For the reason of the point, it may be drawn—

(1.) From the judicial proceedings of God, the great King of kings, and Supreme Ruler of the universe, who for his commands is indeed careful, but for his worship jealous : and, therefore, in states notoriously irreligious, by a secret and irresistible power, countermands their deepest projects, splits their counsels, and smites their most refined policies with frustration and a curse ; being resolved that the kingdoms of the world shall fall down before him, either in his adoration or their own confusion.

(2.) The reason of the doctrine may be drawn from the necessary dependence of the very principles of government upon

religion; and this I shall pursue more fully. The great business of government is to procure obedience, and keep off disobedience: the great springs upon which those two move are rewards and punishments, answering the two ruling affections of man's mind—hope and fear. For since there is a natural opposition between the judgment and the appetite, the former respecting what is honest, the latter what is pleasing—which two qualifications seldom concur in the same thing, and withal man's design in every action is delight—therefore, to render things honest also practicable, they must be first represented desirable, which cannot be but by proposing honesty clothed with pleasure; and since it presents no pleasure to the sense, it must be fetched from the apprehension of a future reward: for, unquestionless, duty moves not so much upon command as promise. Now, therefore, that which proposes the greatest and most suitable rewards to obedience, and the greatest errors and punishments to disobedience, doubtless is the most likely to enforce one, and prevent the other. But it is religion, that does this, which to happiness and misery joins eternity. And these, supposing the immortality of the soul, which philosophy indeed conjectures, but only religion proves, or, which is as good, persuades—I say these two things, eternal happiness and eternal misery, meeting with a persuasion that the soul is immortal, are, without controversy, of all others, the first the most desirable, and the latter the most horrible to human apprehension. Were it not for these, civil government were not able to stand before the prevailing swing of corrupt nature, which would know no honesty but advantage, no duty but in pleasure, nor any law but its own will. Were not these frequently thundered into the understandings of men, the magistrate might enact, order, and proclaim; proclamations might be hung upon walls and posts, and there they might hang, seen and despised, more like malefactors than laws: but when religion binds them upon the conscience, conscience will either persuade or terrify men into their practice. For put the case: a man knew, and that upon sure grounds, that he might do an advantageous murder or robbery, and not be discovered—what human laws could hinder him, which he knows cannot inflict any penalty where they can make no discovery? But religion assures him that no sin, though concealed from human eyes, can either escape God's sight in this world, or his vengeance in the other. Put the case also that men look upon death without fear, in which sense it is nothing, or, at most, very little; ceasing while it is endured, and probably without pain, for it seizes upon the vitals and benumbs the senses—and where there is no sense, there can be

no pain. I say, if, while a man is acting his will towards sin, he should also thus act his reason, to despise death, where would be the terror of the magistrate, who can neither threaten or inflict any more? Hence an old malefactor, in his execution at the gallows, made no other confession but this—that he had very jocosely passed over his life in such courses; and he that would not, for fifty years' pleasure, endure half an hour's pain, deserved to die a worse death than himself. Questionless, this man was not ignorant before that there were such things as laws, assizes, and gallows; but had he considered and believed the terrors of another world, he might probably have found a fairer passage out of this. If there was not a minister in every parish, you would quickly find cause to increase the number of constables: and if the churches were not employed to be places to hear God's law, there would be need of them to be prisons for the breakers of the laws of men. Hence it is observable, that the tribe of Levi had not one place or portion together, like the rest of the tribes: but, because it was their office to dispense religion, they were diffused over all the tribes, that they might be continually preaching to the rest their duty to God; which is the most effectual way to dispose them to obedience to man: for he that truly fears God, cannot despise the magistrate. Yea, so near is the connexion between the civil state and religious, that heretofore, if you look upon well regulated, civilized heathen nations, you will find the government and the priesthood united in the same person: "*Anius Rex idem hominum, Phæbique Sacerdos*;"—if under the true worship of God, "*Melchisedec, king of Salem, and priest of the most high God*." And after, Moses (whom, as we acknowledge a pious, so Atheists themselves will confess to have been a wise, prince), when he took the kingly government upon himself, by his own choice, seconded by divine institution, vested the priesthood in his brother Aaron; both whose concernments were so coupled, that if nature had not, yet their religious, nay, their civil interests, would have made them brothers. And it was once the design of the emperor of Germany, Maximilian I., to have joined the popedom and the empire together, and to have got himself chosen Pope, and by that means derived the papacy to his succeeding emperors. Had he effected it, doubtless there would not have been such scuffles between them and the Bishop of Rome; the civil interest of the state would not have been undermined by an adverse interest, managed by the specious and potent pretences of religion. And to see, even amongst us, how these two are united, how the former is upheld by the latter—the magistrate sometimes cannot do his own

office dexterously, but by acting the minister. Hence it is that judges of assizes find it necessary in their charges to use pathetic discourses of conscience; and if it were not for the sway of this, they would often lose the best evidence in the world against malefactors, which is confession: for no man would confess and be hanged here, but to avoid being damned hereafter. Thus I have in general shown the utter inability of the magistrate to attain the ends of government without the aid of religion. But it may be here replied, that many are not at all moved with arguments drawn from hence, or with the happy or miserable state of the soul after death; and therefore this avails little to procure obedience, and consequently to advance government. I answer, by confession that this *is* true of Epicures, Atheists, and some pretended philosophers, who have stifled the notions of a Deity and the soul's immortality; but the unprepossessed on the one hand, and the well disposed on the other, who both together make much the major part of the world, are very apt to be affected with a due fear of these things: and religion, accommodating itself to the generality, though not to every particular temper, sufficiently secures government, inasmuch as that stands or falls according to the behaviour of the multitude. And whatsoever conscience makes the generality obey, to that prudence will make the rest conform. Wherefore, having proved the *dependence* of government upon religion, I shall now demonstrate that the *safety* of government depends upon the *TRUTH* of religion. False religion, is in its nature, the greatest bane and destruction to government in the world. The reason is, because whatsoever is false is also weak; and so much as any religion has of falsity, it loses of strength and existence. Falsity gains authority only from ignorance, and therefore is in danger to be known; for, from being false, the next immediate step is, to be known to be such. And what prejudice this would be to the civil government is apparent, if men should be awed into obedience, and affrighted from sin, by rewards and punishments, proposed to them in such a religion, which afterwards should be detected, and found a mere falsity and cheat; for if one part be but found to be false, it will make the whole suspicious. And men will then not only cast off obedience to the civil magistrate, but they will do it with disdain and rage, that they have been deceived so long, and brought to do that out of conscience which was imposed upon them out of design: for though men are often willingly deceived, yet still it must be under an opinion of being instructed; though they love the deception, yet they mortally hate it under that appearance. Therefore it is no ways safe for a magistrate, who is to build his

dominion upon the fears of men, to build those fears upon a false religion. It is not to be doubted but the absurdity of Jeroboam's calves made many Israelites turn subjects to Rehoboam's government, that they might be proselytes to his religion.

Hence Machiavel himself, in his animadversions upon Livy, makes it appear that the weakness of Italy, which was once so strong, was caused by the corrupt practices of the Papacy, in depraving and misusing religion to that purpose, which he, though himself a Papist, says could not have happened had the Christian religion been kept in its first and native simplicity. Thus much may suffice for the clearing of the first proposition.

The inferences from hence are two.

1. If government depends upon religion, then this shows the pestilential design of those that attempt to disjoin the civil and ecclesiastical interests, setting the latter wholly out of the tuition of the former. But it is clear that the fanatics know no other step to the magistracy but through the ruin of the ministry. There is a great analogy between the body natural and politic, in which the ecclesiastical or spiritual part justly supplies the part of the soul; and the violent separation of this from the other does as certainly infer death and dissolution, as the disjunction of the body and the soul in the natural; for when this once departs, it leaves the body of the commonwealth a carcase, noisome, and exposed to be devoured by birds of prey. The ministry will be one day found, according to Christ's word, the salt of the earth—the only thing that keeps societies of men from stench and corruption. These two interests are of that nature, that it is to be feared they cannot be divided; without also proving opposite, and, not resting in a bare diversity, quickly rise into a contrariety: these two are to the state what the elements of fire and water are to the body, which, united, compose—separated, destroy it. I am not of the Papists' opinion, who would make the spiritual above the civil state, in power as well as dignity, but rather subject it to the civil; yet thus much I dare affirm, that the civil, which is superior, is upheld and kept in being by the ecclesiastical and inferior; as it is in a building, where the upper part is supported by the lower—the Church resembling the foundation, which indeed is the lowest part, but the most considerable. The magistracy cannot so much protect the ministry, but the ministers may do more in serving the magistrate. A taste of which truth you may take from the holy war, to which how fast and eagerly did men go, when the priest persuaded them, that whosoever died in that expedition was a martyr! Those that will not be convinced

what a help this is to the magistracy, would find how considerable it is, if they should chance to clash; this would certainly eat out the other. For the magistrate cannot urge obedience upon such potent grounds as the minister, if so disposed, can urge disobedience. As for instance, if my governor should command me to do a thing, or I must die, or forfeit my estate, and the minister steps in and tells me that I offend God and ruin my soul if I obey that command, it is easy to see a greater force in this persuasion from the advantage of its ground. And if divines once begin to curse Meros, we shall see that Levi can use the sword as well as Simeon; and although ministers do not handle, yet they can employ it.

2. If the safety of government is founded upon the truth of religion, then this shows the danger of anything that may make even the true religion suspected to be false. To be false, and to be thought false, is all one in respect of men who act not according to truth, but apprehension: as, on the contrary, a false religion, while apprehended true, has the force and efficacy of truth. Now there is nothing more apt to induce men to a suspicion of any religion, than frequent innovation and change: for since the object of religion, God—the subject of it, the soul of man, and the business of it, truth, are always one and the same—variety and novelty is a just presumption of falsity; it argues sickness and distemper in the mind, as well as in the body, when a man is continually turning and tossing from one side to the other. The wise Romans ever dreaded the least innovation in religion: hence we find the advice of Mecœnas to Augustus Cæsar, in “Dion Cassius,” in the fifty-second book, where he counsels him to detest and persecute all innovators of divine worship, not only as contemners of the gods, but as the most pernicious disturbers of the state. For when men venture to make changes in things sacred, it argues great boldness with God, and this naturally imports little belief of him; which if the people once perceive, they will take their creed also, not from the magistrate’s laws, but his example. Hence in England, where religion has been still purifying, and hereupon almost always in the fire and the furnace, Atheists and irreligious persons have taken no small advantage from our changes. For in King Edward VI.’s time the divine worship was twice altered in two new liturgies. In the first of Queen Mary the Protestant religion was persecuted with fire and faggot, by law and public counsel of the same persons who had so lately established it. Upon the coming in of Queen Elizabeth, religion was changed again, and within a few days the public council of the nation made it death for a priest to convert any man to that

religion, which before, with so much eagerness of zeal, had been restored. So that it is observed by an author, "that in the space of twelve years there were four changes about religion made in England, and that by the public council and authority of the realm, which were more than were made by any Christian state throughout the world, so soon one after another, in the space of fifteen hundred years before." Hence it is that the enemies of God take occasion to blaspheme, and call our religion statism : and now, adding to the former those many changes that have happened since, I am afraid we shall not so easily claw off that name ; nor, though *we* may satisfy our own consciences in what we profess, be able to repel and clear off the objections of the rational world about us, which, not being interested in our changes as we are, will not judge of them as we judge, but debate them by impartial reason, by the nature of the thing, the general practice of the Church ; against which new lights, sudden impulses of the spirit, extraordinary calls, will be but weak arguments to prove anything but the madness of those that use them ; and that the Church must needs wither, being blasted with such inspirations. We see, therefore, how fatal and ridiculous innovations in the Church are ; and, indeed, when changes are so frequent, it is not properly religion, but fashion. This, I think, we may build upon as a sure ground, that where there is continual change, there is great show of uncertainty ; and uncertainty in religion is a shrewd motive, if not to deny, yet to doubt of its truth.

Thus much for the first doctrine. I proceed now to the second, viz., that the next and most effectual way to destroy religion is to debase the teachers and dispensers of it. In the handling of this I shall show—

I. How the dispensers of religion, the ministers of the word, are debased or rendered vile.

II. How the debasing or vilifying them is a means to destroy religion.

I. For the first of these, the ministers and dispensers of the word are rendered base or vile two ways.

1. By divesting them of all temporal privileges and advantages, as inconsistent with their calling. It is strange, since the priest's office heretofore was always splendid, and almost regal, that it is now looked upon as a piece of religion, to make it low and sordid. So that the use of the word *minister* is brought down to the literal signification of it, *a servant* : for now to *serve* and to *minister*, *servile* and *ministerial* are terms equivalent. But in the Old Testament the same word signifies a *priest*, and a *prince*, or *chief ruler*. And it is strange that the name

should be the same, when the nature of the thing is so exceeding different.

In old time, before the placing this office only in the line of Aaron, the head of the family, and the first-born, offered sacrifice for the rest—that is, was their priest. And we know that such rule and dignity belonged at first to the masters of families; that they had *jus vitæ et necis*, jurisdiction and power of life and death in their own family: and from hence was derived the beginning of kingly government—a king being only a civil head, or master of a politic family, the whole people;—so that we see the same was the foundation of the royal and sacerdotal dignity. As for the dignity of this office among the Jews, it is so pregnantly set forth in Holy Writ, that it is unquestionable. Kings and priests are still mentioned together: “The Lord hath despised, in the indignation of his anger, the king and the priest.” “Hear, O priests, and give ear, O house of the king.” “And the man that doth presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth there to minister before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die.” Hence Paul, together with a blow, received this reprehension, “Revilest thou God’s high priest?” And Paul, in the next verse, does not defend himself by pleading an extraordinary motion of the Spirit, or that he was sent to reform the Church, and might therefore lawfully vilify the priesthood and all sacred orders; but in the fifth verse he makes an excuse, and that from ignorance, the only thing that could take away the fault, namely, that he knew not that he was high priest, and subjoins a reason, which further advances the truth here defended: “For it is written, thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.”

The giving honour to the priesthood was a custom universal amongst all civilized nations; and whatsoever is universal, is also natural, as not being founded upon compact, or the particular humours of men, but flowing from the native results of reason; and that which is natural, neither does nor can oppose religion. But you will say, this concerns not us, who have an express rule and word revealed. Christ was himself poor and despised, and withal has instituted such a ministry. To the first part of this plea I answer, that Christ came to suffer, yet the sufferings and miseries of Christ do not oblige all Christians to undertake the like. For the second, that the ministry of Christ was low, and despised by his institution, I utterly deny. It was so, indeed, by the malice and persecution of the heathen princes; but what does this argue or infer for a low dejected ministry in a flourishing state, which professes to encourage Christianity? But, to dash this cavil, read but the practice of Christian emperors and

kings all along, down from the time of Constantine, in what respect, what honour and splendour they treated the ministers ; and then let our advorsaries produce their puny, pitiful argnments to the contrary, against the general, clear, undoubted vogue and current of all antiquity. As for two or three little countries about us, the learned and impartial will not value their practice ; in one of which places the minister has been seen, for mere want, to mend shoes on the Saturday, and been heard to preach on the Sunday. In the other place, stating the several orders of the citizens, they place their ministers after their apothecaries—that is, the physician of the soul after the drugster of the body ; a fit practice for those, who, if they were to rank things as well as persons, would place their religion after their trade.

And thus much concerning the first way of debasing the ministers and ministry.

2. The second way is by admitting ignorant, sordid, illiterate persons to this function. This is to give the royal stamp to a piece of lead. I confess, God has no need of any man's parts or learning ; but certainly, then, he has much less need of his ignorance and ill behaviour. It is a sad thing when all other employments shall empty themselves into the ministry—when men shall repair to it, not for preferment, but refuge ; like malefactors flying to the altar only to save their lives ; or like those of Eli's race, that should come crouching, and seek to be put into the priest's office, that they might eat a piece of bread. Heretofore there was required splendour of parentage to recommend any one to the priesthood, as Josephus witnesses in a treatise which he wrote of his own life, where he says, "To have right to deal in things sacred, was, amongst them, accounted an argument of a noble and illustrious descent." God would not accept the offals of other professions. Doubtless many rejected Christ upon this thought, that he was the carpenter's son, who would have embraced him had they known him to have been the Son of David. The preferring undeserving persons to this great service was evidently Jeroboam's sin ; and how Jeroboam's practice and offence has been continued amongst us, in another guise, is not unknown : for has not learning disqualified men for approbation to the ministry ? Have not parts and abilities been reputed enemies to grace, and qualities no ways ministerial ? While friends, faction, well-meaning, and little understanding, have been accomplishments beyond study and the university ; and to falsify a story of conversion, beyond pertinent answers and clear resolutions to the hardest and most concerning questions. So that matters have been brought to this pass, that if a man amongst his sons had any blind or disfigured, he laid him aside

for the ministry; and such an one was presently approved, as having a mortified countenance. In short, it was a fiery furnace, which often approved dross and rejected gold. But, thanks be to God, those spiritual wickednesses are now discharged from their high places. Hence it was that many rushed into the ministry, as being the only calling that they could profess without serving an apprenticeship. Hence also we had those who could preach sermons, but not defend them: the reason of which is clear, because the works and writings of learned men might be borrowed, but not the abilities. Had, indeed, the old Levitical hierarchy still continued, in which it was part of the ministerial office to slay the sacrifices, to cleanse the vessels, to scour the flesh forks, to sweep the temple, and carry the filth and rubbish to the brook Kidron, no persons living had been fitter for the ministry, and to serve in this nature at the altar. But since it is made a labour of the mind—as to inform men’s judgments, and move their affections, to resolve difficult places of Scripture, to decide and clear off controversies—I cannot see how to be a butcher, scavenger, or any other such trade, does at all qualify or prepare men for this work. But as unfit as they were, yet, to clear a way for such unto the ministry, we have had almost all sermons full of gibes and scoffs at human learning. Away with “vain philosophy, with the disputer of this world, and the enticing words of man’s wisdom,” and set up the foolishness of preaching, the simplicity of the Gospel. Thus divinity has been brought in upon the ruins of humanity, by forcing the words of the Scripture from the sense, and then hailing them to the worst of drudgeries, to set a *jus divinum* upon ignorance and imperfection, and recommend natural weakness for supernatural grace. Hereupon the ignorant have took heart to venture upon this great calling; and instead of cutting their way to it, according to the usual course, through the knowledge of the tongues, the study of philosophy, school divinity, the fathers and councils, they have taken another and a shorter cut; and having read perhaps a treatise or two upon “The Heart,” “The Bruised Reed,” “The Crumbs of Comfort,” “Wollebuis in English,” and some other little authors—the usual furniture of old women’s closets—they have set forth as accomplished divines, and forthwith they present themselves to the service; and there have not been wanting Jeroboams as willing to consecrate and receive them, as they to offer themselves. And this has been one of the most fatal and almost irrecoverable blows that has been given to the ministry.

And this may suffice concerning the second way of debasing God’s ministers, namely, by entrusting the ministry to raw,

unlearned, ill-bred persons; so that what Solomon speaks of a proverb in the mouth of a fool, the same may be said of the ministry vested in them, that it is like a pearl in a swine's snout.

I proceed now to the second thing proposed in the discussion of this doctrine, which is to show how the debasing of ministers tends to the destruction of religion.

This it does two ways—

1. Because it brings them under exceeding scorn and contempt; and then let none think religion itself secure: for the vulgar have not such logical heads as to be able to abstract such subtil conceptions, as to separate the man from the minister, or to consider the same person under a double capacity, and so honour him as a divine, while they despise him as poor. But suppose they could, yet actions cannot distinguish, as conceptions do; and therefore every act of contempt strikes at both, and unavoidably wounds the ministry through the sides of the minister. And we must know that the least degree of contempt weakens religion, because it is absolutely contrary to the nature of it—religion properly consisting in a reverential esteem of things sacred. Now that which in any measure weakens religion, will at length destroy it: for the weakening of a thing is only a partial destruction of it. Poverty and meanness of condition expose the wisest to scorn, it being natural for men to place their esteem rather upon things great than good; and the poet observes, “that this *Infelix Paupertas* has nothing in it more intolerable than this, that it renders men ridiculous.” And then how easy and natural it is for contempt to pass from the person to the office—from him that speaks to the thing that he speaks of—experience proves: counsel being seldom valued so much for the truth of the thing, as the credit of him that gives it. Observe an excellent passage to this purpose in Eccl. ix. 14, 15. We have an account of a little city, with few men in it, besieged by a great and potent king; and in verse 15 we read, that “there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city.” A worthy service indeed, and certainly we may expect that some honourable recompense should follow it; a deliverer of his country, and that in such distress, could not but be advanced: but we find a contrary event in the next words of the same verse, “Yet none remembered that same poor man.” Why, what should be the reason? Was he not a man of parts and wisdom? and is not wisdom honourable? Yes, but he was poor. But was he not also successful, as well as wise? True; but still he was poor: and once grant this, and you cannot keep off that unavoidable sequel in the next verse: “The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.” We may

believe it upon Solomon's word, who was rich as well as wise, and therefore knew the force of both : and probably, had it not been for his riches, the Queen of Sheba would never have come so far only to have heard his wisdom. Observe her behaviour when she came : though, upon the hearing of Solomon's wisdom, and the resolution of her hard questions, she expressed a just admiration ; yet when Solomon afterwards showed her his palace, his treasures, and the temple which he had built, it is said, "there was no more spirit in her." What was the cause of this ? Certainly the magnificence, the pomp and splendour of such a structure : it struck her into an ecstasy beyond his wise answers. She esteemed this as much above his wisdom, as astonishment is beyond bare admiration. She admired his wisdom, but she adored his magnificence. So apt is the mind, even of wise persons, to be surprised with the superficialities or circumstances of things, and value or undervalue spirituals according to the manner of their external appearance. When circumstances fail, the substance seldom long survives : clothes are no part of the body, yet take away clothes, and the body will die. Livy observes of Romulus, that being to give laws to his new Romans, he found no better way to procure an esteem and reverence to them, than by first procuring it to himself, by splendour of habit and retinue, and other signs of royalty. And the wise Numa, his successor, took the same course to enforce the religious laws, namely, by giving the same pomp to the priest who was to dispense them. "*Sacerdotem creavit, insignique eum veste, et curuli regiâ sellâ adornavit ;*" that is, he adorned him with a rich robe, and a royal chair of state. And in our judicatures, take away the trumpet, the scarlet, the attendance, and the lordship, which would be to make justice naked, as well as blind, and the law would lose much of its terror, and consequently of its authority. Let the minister be abject and low, his interest inconsiderable, the word will suffer for his sake : the message will still find reception according to the dignity of the messenger. Imagine an ambassador presenting himself in a poor frieze jerkin and tattered clothes—certainly he would have but small audience ; his embassy would speed rather according to the weakness of him that brought it, than the majesty of him that sent it. It will fare alike with the ambassadors of Christ ; the people will give them audience according to their presence. A notable example of which we have in the behaviour of some to Paul himself. Hence, in the Jewish Church, it was cautiously provided in the law, that none that was blind or lame, or had any remarkable defect in his body, was capable of the priestly office : because these things naturally make a person contemned,

and this presently reflects upon the function. This, therefore, is the first way by which the low, despised condition of the ministers tends to the destruction of the ministry and religion, namely, because it subjects their persons to scorn, and consequently their calling; and it is not imaginable that men will be brought to obey what they cannot esteem.

2. The second way by which it tends to the ruin of the ministry is, because it discourages men of fit parts and abilities from undertaking it. And certain it is, that as the calling dignifies the man, so the man much more advances his calling: as a garment, though it warms the body, has a return with an advantage, being much more warmed by it. And how often a good cause may miscarry without a wise manager, and the faith for want of a defender, is, or at least may be, known. It is not the truth of an assertion, but the skill of the disputant, that keeps off a baffle; not the justness of a cause, but the valour of the soldiers, that must win the field. When a learned Paul was converted, and undertook the ministry, it stopped the mouths of those that said none but poor weak fishermen preach Christianity; and so his learning silenced the scandal, as well as strengthened the Church. Religion, placed in a soul of exquisite knowledge and abilities, as in a castle, finds not only habitation, but defence. And what a learned foreign divine said of the English preaching, may be said of all: "*Plus est in artifice quàm in arte.*" So much of moment is there in the professors of anything to depress or raise the profession. What is it that kept the Church of Rome strong, athletic, and flourishing for so many centuries, but the happy succession of the choicest wits engaged to her service by suitable preferments? And what strength, do we think, would that give to the true religion, that is able thus to establish a false? Religion in a great measure stands or falls according to the abilities of those that assert it. And if, as some observe, men's desires are usually as large as their abilities, what course have we taken to allure the former, that we might engage the latter to our assistance? But we have taken all ways to affright and discourage scholars from looking towards this sacred calling: for will men lay out their wit and judgment upon that employment, for the undertaking of which both will be questioned? Would men not long since have spent toilsome days and watchful nights in the laborious quest of knowledge preparative to this work, at length to come and dance attendance for approbation upon a junto of petty tyrants, acted by party and prejudice, who denied fitness from learning, and grace from morality? Will a man exhaust his livelihood upon books, and his health, the best part of his life, upon

study, to be at length thrust into a poor village, where he shall have his due precariously, and entreat for his own, and when he has it, live poorly and contemptibly upon it, while the same or less labour bestowed upon any other calling would bring not only comfort, but splendour—not only maintenance, but abundance?

Neither let any here reply, that it becomes not a ministerial spirit to undertake such a calling for reward. Suppose it were the duty of scholars to choose this calling, in the midst of all its discouragements: yet a prudent governor, who knows it to be his wisdom, as well as his duty, to take the best course to advance religion, will not consider men's duty, but their practice; not what they ought to do, but what they use to do; and therefore draw over the best qualified to this service, by such ways as are most apt to persuade and induce men. Solomon built his temple with the tallest cedars; and surely when God refused the defective and the maimed for sacrifice, we cannot think that he requires them for the priesthood. When learning, abilities, and what is excellent in the world, forsake the Church, we may easily foretel its ruin, without the gift of prophecy. And when ignorance succeeds in the place of learning, weakness in the room of judgment, we may be sure heresy and confusion will quickly come in the room of religion. For undoubtedly there is no way so effectual to betray the truth, as to procure it a weak defender.

Wherefore the sum of all is this, to advise and desire those whom it may concern to consider Jeroboam's punishment, and then they will have little heart to Jeroboam's sin.

THE DIVINE INSTITUTION OF CIVIL MAGISTRACY.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. OFFSPRING BLACKALL, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

IF the civil magistrate be the minister of God, that is, if he acts by a divine commission, and all the authority he has over others be derived from God, then even his authority, though he be the highest of all earthly powers, is not absolute and unlimited; then he can act with authority no farther, nor otherwise, than as he is warranted to do by his commission; and then also the same God, the Sovereign Lord of all, who has granted him a commission for one purpose, may grant another commission to another person for another purpose.

I mean plainly this, which is not only a supposition of what might be, but is also true in fact: God has given the civil magistrate commission and authority to govern well all the people committed to his charge, to enact and execute all needful laws for the preservation of justice and peace among his subjects; nay, and to him also it appertains to provide for the establishment of the true religion, and for the regular exercise thereof; and God has also armed him with the power of the sword, to cut off evil-doers of all sorts, that is, not only those who invade the civil rights of others, but likewise such as turn religion into rebellion, and faith into faction: and from subjection to this authority of the civil magistrate, or supreme legislative power, no order of men whatsoever is exempt; he is supreme in all causes, and over all persons. "Let every soul (says the apostle) be subject to the higher powers." But it is not within the commission of the civil magistrate, as such, to baptize, to preach the Gospel, to serve at the altar, to excommunicate, to absolve, and to minister in holy things. The power of performing these sacred offices is granted by another commission, and to another order of men; and they have their authority to do these things as immediately from God, as the civil magistrate has his. For it was not to the civil magistrate, but to them, that our Saviour said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." It was to them, that

is, only to his apostles, and their successors in the ministry of the Gospel by lawful ordination, that he said, "Go, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It was to them that he gave in command to do after his decease, and to continue to do until his second coming, what he himself had just then before done, when "He took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body; and when he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." And, lastly, it was to them that he said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Well; but what if the civil magistrate will take upon him to do these things in person? Or what if he should presume, by his own authority only, to command or commission others, not qualified by lawful ordination, to do them?

I answer, he may do so, if he will; for who should hinder him? But what he does of this kind, being done without sufficient authority, must certainly be done without effect. He may do so, if he will; and if he that does so be the supreme magistrate of all, there is no power upon earth that I know of to correct or punish him for his fault; but "He that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they." There is certainly a power above, that both can and will punish offenders, though they be of the highest rank; and "mighty men shall be mightily tormented."

He may, therefore, if he pleases, say to the priests, as Corah and his company did to Moses and Aaron, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore, then, lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Or he may, as King Saul did, usurp the priest's office, when, after a long waiting for Samuel to no purpose, he himself offered a burnt-offering, thinking himself, as he said, under a sort of necessity of doing it, because of his present distress; and as was done by King Uzziah afterwards, when "he went into the temple of the Lord, to burn incense upon the altar of incense." Or, lastly, he may do as King Jeroboam did, who made, or consecrated, by his own authority only, "priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi." But I am sure, if

he believes the truth of those histories, he will have but little encouragement to follow those examples; especially if he considers, farther, that all that do the like things are guilty before God of the like fault, though they may not be always alike punished for it in this world.

The magistrate, then, has his authority from God; he is the minister of God: and so have likewise the dispensers of his holy word and sacraments; they, as to the spiritual powers which they are entrusted with, are not the servants of the state, but the ministers of Jesus Christ.

There is, therefore, no such absurdity, as some would make us believe, in two distinct powers, within the same state or nation, so much independent of each other as these are supposed to be. Neither, methinks, should the notion of it, in this case, seem at all strange or uncouth, when it is no more than we see every day in other instances; for do not the mayors, or other chief magistrates, in every city and corporation within this kingdom, act, all alike, by commission from the queen, as sovereign over all, without deriving any authority from one another? And within the same city, does not the same sovereign power grant diverse commissions, to diverse persons, for diverse purposes, to every one of which all the inhabitants of that city are bound to be in subjection? And do not all the persons so commissioned move and act, each in his proper sphere, without more dependence on each other than the sovereign is pleased to contrive and order? What more absurdity, then, is there in a king's discharging the king's duty, and a priest the priest's, supposing that neither of them does receive his authority from the other, but from God?

Neither can any such public inconvenience as some imagine, or at least would make other people apprehend, ever follow from the establishment of two such independent powers, upon supposition that they both receive their proper authority from a power that is superior to them both, and that they are both subject to this regulation and correction; provided also that both these subordinate powers do keep within the bounds of their proper commissions; and if they do not, he, by whose authority they both act, and who is superior to them both, knows how to lay the blame where the fault lies, and is able to maintain his own supreme authority over them both. For we see the same thing every day in other instances: every city, every town, has its proper officers, and those of various sorts, and to various purposes; but, nevertheless, having all of them their authority from the same sovereign power of the state, and every one of them having his proper business assigned him, they all move

regularly, every one in his own proper sphere, without giving one another any manner of disturbance. And therefore so likewise may the civil magistrate and the minister of the Gospel do, though they have neither of them their commission from the other, but both from God; nay, so they must do, if they both act within the bounds of their respective commissions; for their commissions are of different kinds, and to quite different purposes; their businesses do no ways interfere with or hinder each other, but rather quite otherwise. For the priest's power is no diminution at all to the king's; nay, it rather tends to establish it; it being one thing, among others, given him in charge by God, to put the people in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates. And, on the other side, the kingly power is no hindrance at all to the priest in the discharge of his ministerial office: it may be, and it oftentimes is, very helpful and assistant to him therein; it is always so, when, according to the promise of God made long ago to his Church, and which we have the happiness to see verified among us, kings are her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers.

Well; but what if these two powers should clash? Would not that be a great inconvenience?

Yes, most certainly: and so it would be in any kingdom, in any state, in any city, if the subordinate magistrates and officers, all acting by the sovereign's commission, and who had every one their several offices assigned them, should clash, or should encroach upon one another. But the possibility of such an inconvenience happening from such a constitution is no reason why things should not be so constituted; because, however otherwise they were ordered, they would still be liable to some inconvenience or other, from the irregular lusts and passions of men; much less is it an argument and proof, against fact, that they are not so constituted. And in case this should happen, still, as was said before, there is a remedy; for, it being supposed that all these subordinate officers are subject to one supreme power, he will know where to lay the blame, and he will be able to punish the offender, whoever he be, that dares to assume or exercise an authority that was not granted him.

But let us see, however, at last, what would be the consequence, in case the civil and ecclesiastical officer, under God, the Sovereign Lord of all, should clash or interfere, or should either of them encroach upon the other; and let us see what in that case would be to be done by the one or by the other of them, or by the people supposed to be subject to them both.

Suppose then, first, that the priest, as such, takes upon him to act as a civil magistrate. What must be said in this case is,

that most certainly he is highly to blame for so doing, there being plainly no such power within his commission as a priest. For if the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Head over all things to the Church, was not, as himself owned, of this world, much less can that of his ministers be so.

The remedy, therefore, of this inconvenience is very obvious; and the civil magistrate has it in his own power. For, seeing the man was not, by his being ordained a priest, discharged from his allegiance to his sovereign, nor made less subject to him than he was before, the prince has still full power over him, to deal with him just as he would or might do with any other of his subjects that was guilty of the like crime: he may amerce, he may imprison him; he may, if his offence be what the law has made capital, condemn him to death, and will be justified before God, and in his own conscience, for so doing; nay, he would be to blame if he should not do so: "For he beareth not the sword in vain; but is a revenger, to execute wrath upon him, whosoever he be, that doeth evil."

Or put the case, secondly, that the prince takes upon him, in virtue of his sovereign authority, wholly to prohibit the priests in the exercise of their ministerial office; that he forbids them to preach the Gospel within his dominion, to baptize any of his subjects, to hold any assemblies for Christian worship, or the like: the consequence of this would be, that the priests, the ministers of Jesus Christ, being not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead, would be still bound to go on in the doing of their duty; and if thereupon he should question them for their disobedience to his order, it would be their part to say, as the apostles did in the like case to the rulers of the Jews, "Whether it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." And if after this he should proceed farther to punish them for it, it would then be their duty to behave themselves as the apostles likewise did in that case; that is, to suffer meekly and quietly the confiscation of their goods, the imprisonment of their persons, or even death itself; and to rejoice that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. "For if ye suffer for righteousness sake (says the apostle), happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." And again, "Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

Or let it be supposed farther, thirdly, that the prince, whether with or without a prohibition to the lawfully ordained ministers of the Gospel, takes upon himself to exercise their proper office; or, by virtue of his supreme authority over all, to appoint others,

not lawfully ordained, to perform it ; what would be the consequence of this ? and what would be the priest's duty in this case ?

I answer, the consequence would be, that, as was said before, there would be a perfect nullity in everything that the prince did of this kind ; and the priest's duty in this case would be, to remonstrate to the prince, in the most decent and respectful manner, the unlawfulness of such his attempt ; nay, and to withstand him, too, with such a sort of force as the most dutiful son might use to restrain and hold back his father from running into a fire, or falling into a pit ; as the priests of the temple did when their king "went into the temple of the Lord, to burn incense upon the altar of incense." They "went in after him (says the text), and withstood Uzziah, the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense. Go out of the sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed ; neither shall it be for thine honour from the Lord God." Thus much, I say, the priests may say and do ; but if by all this the prince will not be restrained from his sacrilegious attempt, I know nothing more that they can lawfully do, but only refer the matter to the judgment of God, who did in that case of Uzziah sufficiently vindicate the honour of his own institution ; and will always do so, in such manner as to his infinite wisdom shall seem best.

Or, lastly—for I think this is the only case different from the three former that can be put—let it be supposed that these two powers do direct or order contrary things. And here the question will be, how the people, who are supposed to be subject to both these powers, ought in that case to behave themselves. And the impossibility of the people's observing both their orders, is mightily urged as an unanswerable argument that there cannot be two such independent powers within the same state or nation.

But why not ? Why not a priest and a prince, each acting by commission from God, as well as a prince and a father, to both whom the same person, as a subject to one, and as son to the other, is obliged by the law of God to yield obedience ? For neither does the prince receive his kingly power over this person from the father, nor does the father receive his fatherly power over him from the prince ; but both have their several respective powers over him by divine institution : and it is as possible that the prince and the father should order contrary things, as that the prince and the priest should do so. Let them, therefore, who make this such a wonderful difficulty, say what the son is to do in that case, and then they will readily discern what the subject is to do in this.

Now it is certain that no law of the state can wholly vacate the father's authority over his son, so as to make it lawful in the general for a son to disobey his father; and yet the father himself being a subject of the state, the exercise of his parental power may be restrained, in some particular instances, by the laws of the state; so as that it may not be lawful either for him to command, or for the son at his command to do, some particular things, which he, unless so restrained, might lawfully have required; and the son, unless the state had forbidden them, had been bound, at his father's command, to have done.

And the case is the same here; the priest being, as well as the civil magistrate, the minister of God, the civil magistrate cannot vacate his commission. No law of the state can make it lawful for the people to deny or refuse all obedience to their spiritual guides—to those who, as the apostle expresses it, “are over them in the Lord;” for that would be to make void a law of God, commanding the people to “obey them that have the rule over them, and to submit themselves.” But then the ministers of Christ being themselves (no less than the people committed to their charge) obliged to be “subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates;” “let every soul be subject to the higher powers;” it plainly follows that their power and authority over their people, though, as to its original—that is, as it is derived immediately from God—it may be said to be co-ordinate with the magistrates’; yet, as to the exercise of it, in some particulars, is subordinate thereto, and subject to such regulations as are lawfully prescribed thereby.

And therefore, in a Christian kingdom or state—and I have no occasion now to consider any other case—the priest, the minister of Jesus Christ, cannot, in opposition to the supreme power of the nation, lay anything as a duty on the consciences of the people, but what he can prove to be so from the Gospel of Christ, of which he is ordained a minister. But the supreme magistrate's authority, even in religious as well as civil cases, is more extensive. The proper subject matter of his power is whatsoever God has given no order about, one way or the other; and every law of his is good and binding to all his subjects, which is not contrary to a divine law.

So that to know whose order is to be observed, in case they should order contrary things, the single point to be considered is, whether the matter about which they do give out different or contrary orders be a thing which the law of God has given any direction about, or not; for if it be, there is no question to be made but that the direction given about it by God himself is to be punctually observed, whosoever he be that orders the contrary. And, on the other side, if it be a matter about which the

law of God has given no direction, there is no more doubt to be made but that the prince's order is to be observed, rather than the priest's; because even the priest himself is subject to the prince in all such things; and if he himself cannot be justified in disobeying any such order of the state, much less can any order of his justify others in the like disobedience.

And now, having spoken sufficiently, as I suppose, of the divine institution of magistracy, I shall proceed to speak somewhat of the other, viz.:

The gracious design of its institution—"He is the minister of God to thee for good."

And here it would be easy, if I had now time for it, to show, both that the good of the people was the design of God in his appointment of magistrates, and also that this design of God is very well answered; that it is indeed much for the people's good that they are thus put in subjection to the power of the magistrate; that they do indeed lead their lives here more quietly and comfortable under the restraint of government, than they could possibly do without it, in case (and that would be the case then) every man might do what was right in his own eyes.

And from the consideration of both these things it would be easy to show, by way of inference, both the magistrate's and the subject's duty, with reference to each other. For—

1. If the magistrate was ordained for the good of the people, and this was the design of God in appointing him to his high office, then this also ought to be his design in the administration and execution of it. It must needs, therefore, be his duty, to the utmost of his power, to defend them from violence, to protect them in their rights, and to preserve them in peace; neither to oppress them himself, nor to suffer them to be oppressed by those that are put in authority under him; and, in a word, to promote, all the ways he can, both their spiritual and their temporal welfare.

2. If it be for the good of the people themselves that they are put in subjection to magistrates, then it is plainly their duty, and a very reasonable one too, to be contented and well pleased with their lot of subjection; and not only so, but likewise with all willingness and cheerfulness to yield such obedience and submission to their governors as is due, and to make them the best returns they are able, for the great benefits which they receive from their care and labour, by a most thankful acknowledgment of the same.

"And if I were speaking to this point in any other place but this, especially on this day of your majesty's happy accession to your throne, it would be an unpardonable omission not to take particular notice of our own happiness in this present reign, or

not to show the manifold obligations that we and all your majesty's subjects are under, both to accept with all thankfulness the many and great benefits we receive from, and have now long enjoyed under your majesty's mostgracious and auspicious government; and also to make the best returns we can for the same, in such a dutiful respect to your majesty's person, and such a willing obedience to your majesty's commands, as are fit to be paid by the most obliged people to the best of princes."*

3. Lastly, the good of the people being the chief thing designed by God in his institution of government, and it being also what, by God's blessing on his own institution, is always (even under the worst constituted and under the worst managed government), in good measure and degree, procured thereby, it must needs be farther incumbent on subjects, in consideration of the benefits they receive from the magistrates' care and protection, above all things to return their hearty thanks to Almighty God for this great blessing; because, in truth, it is from God, as the fountain, that all good things do come, by whosoever hand, or by whatsoever means, they are conveyed to men; and likewise to put up constantly their humble petitions to the same Almighty Being for the continuance of this blessing; because, as Solomon says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." And to both these duties we are exhorted by the apostle: "I exhort that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

But I have not time now to prosecute these points, nor so much as to mention several other things which might be usefully observed and spoken to upon this occasion.

I shall, therefore, conclude all with a good collect of our Church, containing, I think, the most proper application I could make of this whole discourse—

"Almighty God, whose kingdom is everlasting and power infinite, have mercy upon the whole Church; and so rule the heart of thy chosen servant Anne, our queen and governor, that she (knowing whose minister she is) may above all things seek thy honour and glory; and that we and all her subjects (duly considering whose authority she hath) may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey her, in thee, and for thee, according to thy blessed word and ordinance; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever, one God, world without end. Amen."

* The extract is a part of a sermon preached before Queen Anne.

APPENDIX.

LAY AND PRIVATE PATRONAGE.

BY BASSNETT MILLS, ESQ., QUEEN'S COLL., OXON.

THE objections alleged against the system of private patronage in the Church of England are easily refuted. First, it is pretended that, in the exercise of private patronage, it “frequently happens that a minister is obtruded upon his flock without their consent, and often against their will.” But this is an erroneous conclusion, because no clergyman can be said to possess pastoral charge over any parish without the people in effect choosing him thereto: I do not mean that they choose him by every man giving personally his particular vote; but that they choose him through their representative, the patron of the benefice, because their ancient and original interest therein has been by orderly means derived to that patron who chooses for them. For let it be remembered that in this kingdom the tenure of lands is entirely grounded on military laws, and held as in fee under princes who are not made kings by force, or voluntary election, but who are born the sovereign lords of these whole and entire territories; and that those territories having been obtained by their progenitors by conquest, those progenitors retained what they wished in their own hands, and divided the remainder among others, with a reservation of sovereignty and capital interest. The building, therefore, of churches, and the assigning of either parishes or parochial revenues, was impossible, without the consent of those who were the principal owners of land. Those, therefore, who so far benefitted the Church as to give lands and money for the erection of churches, received by common consent (in honour of their great piety, and for the encouragement of others to do the same, who, probably, would otherwise have been slower to erect and endow churches) a perpetual right for themselves and their heirs (or successors) to nominate to those churches, or benefices, men, whose qualifications being allowed by the bishop, he might see fit to admit thereunto. Such was the origin of private patronage, nor can it be denied but that both justice and reason required it. But, secondly, it is objected that private patronage gives occasion to the sin of simony, to pluralities, and to the evils of non-residence. Now, in the first place, if by the sin of simony our opponents mean the sale of advowsons, I readily admit that it is inseparable from the allowance of private patronage, because patronage would otherwise devolve to the most indigent, and, for that reason, the most improper hands it could

be placed in. But the sale of advowsons (if the benefice be not already vacant) does not constitute the sin of simony ; nor did the law against simony ever intend to prohibit the passing of advowsons from one patron to another, as the right of voting (that is, the freehold to which the right pertains) may be bought and sold as freely as any other property ; nor does the law prohibit a clergyman from purchasing the perpetuity of a patronage, any more than any other person. It is, therefore, absurd and unjust to contend that private patronage is the cause of the sin of simony. In the second place, it can be easily proved that pluralities and non-residence are equally unconnected with it. Now, in the consideration of this subject, I would observe, that whilst, on the one hand, we ought not to defend acknowledged improprieties ; so, on the other hand, we ought not to condemn rashly those whom we please for everything we may disallow ; especially as it would be very easy to enumerate many more civil pluralities and non-residences than ecclesiastical, in all of which, absence, or non-residence, has been permitted under the expectation of greater benefits, through industry, elsewhere. I am prepared to admit not only that there are general laws by which the Church of England is bound to provide for the residence of her clergy, and against the abuse of pluralities, but that the clergy themselves are in conscience bound to perform the duties of their spiritual calling without fraud or sophistication, according to the vow and promise made by them at their ordination ; but it does not follow from such admission that the limited allowance of pluralities and non-residences is a transgression of the one, or a violation of the other. It must not be forgotten, that, to furnish every parochial incumbency and chapelry in this realm (to say nothing of Ireland), no less than twelve thousand five hundred ministers would be required, whilst scarcely one-fourth of those incumbencies and chapelries are able to yield a sufficient maintenance for their respective incumbents ; therefore, unless the majority of the people are to be left entirely without the public use and exercise of religion, there is no remedy but by the permission of pluralities.* But it is very evident

* The reader will, I trust, pardon the insertion of the following extract from the prose works of the celebrated John Milton. I am aware that recrimination will not clear the clergy of the Church of England, and therefore I do not rely upon such a plea ; but it will at least prove that our dissenting brethren have but little reason to object against the pluralities of our clergy, seeing that they stand, even in the opinion of one of their own party, so deeply chargeable with the same offence when it was in their power. "The most part of them (writes Milton) were such as had preached and cried down, with great show of zeal, the avarice and pluralities of bishops and prelates ; that one cure of souls was a full employment for one spiritual pastor, how able soever, if not a charge rather above human strength. Yet these conscientious men (ere any part of the work was done for which they came together, and that on the public salary) wanted not boldness to the ignominy and scandal of their pastor-like profession, and especially of their boasted reforma-

that a faculty or licence to hold a plurality of benefices ought not to be granted to all ; the Church of England, therefore, has wisely restricted this especial privilege to a certain limited number, noted for their learning, nobility, or piety, whilst she orders the remainder by those general laws which she had previously enacted against pluralities and non-residence. But it may be, and indeed has been, objected, that as these special privileges, or exemptions from the general law against pluralities and non-residence, dispense with that which the general law prohibits, that they are, therefore, repugnant to the principles of that general law, and consequently to the maxims of common right and of justice. This, however, is an erroneous conclusion, because it is an established maxim that a general law never derogates from a special privilege ; whereas, if the one were contrary to the other, a general law, being in force, should always dissolve a privilege. Privileges and peculiar grants may be perfectly equitable, and yet seem repugnant to the principles of common right and of justice ; for it is contrary neither to the law of God, nor to the law of nature, to exempt men from the law of common right ; nor is such exemption contrary to anything which may avail to strengthen and justify any alleged law. For example, the law of common right binds all men to keep their promises, to perform their agreements and compacts, and to answer the faith they have pledged, either for themselves or for others ; but he who bargains with one under years can derive no benefit by the law of common right, because he brings it against a person who is exempted from the common rule. Thus it is evident that special causes are to be ordered by special rules ; for if men, who have attained years of maturity, subject themselves to any injury or disadvantage by bargaining, yet what they have wittingly and consciously done is strong and in force against them, because they are able to dispose of and manage their own affairs ; whereas one who is under years, being easily subject to imposition on account of his want of experience and judgment, is justly exempted from the law of common right, to which others are justly subject. This evident inequality between men of years and under years is a reason why equity and justice cannot apply equally the same general rule to both, but orders the one by common right, and grants the other by a special privilege. Let us now examine the inconveniences likely to result from pluralities. Now, although every pluralist must necessarily be non-resident on one of his

tion, to seize into their hands, or not unwillingly to accept (besides one, sometimes two or more, of the best livings), collegiate masterships in the universities, rich lectures in the city, setting sail to all winds that might blow again into their covetous bosoms : by which means these great rebukers of non-residence, among so many distant cures, were not ashamed to be seen so quickly pluralists and non-residents themselves, to a fearful condemnation, doubtless, by their own mouths."—*See Milton's Prose Works, by Symmons, vol. iv., p. 84).*

benefices at least, yet in his absence his parish is not left destitute ; for we must suppose the officiating curate to discharge every duty which his principal, were he present, would be bound to discharge, and in a manner equally beneficial to the parish. The only objection to the absence of the principal is whether some inconvenience result to religion in general from the permission of a deputy in such a case ; but the force of this objection is removed, if we consider that the absent rector or vicar is, in the mean time, generally speaking, engaged in a function or employment of equal or perhaps of greater importance to the general interest of religion : for all legal dispensations from residence proceed upon the supposition that the absentee is detained from his living by some engagement of equal or of greater importance ; and all other excuses are fraudulent. Now as the whole revenue of the national Church may properly enough be considered as a common fund for the support of the national religion—which is the most equitable way of considering it, because the value of particular preferments bears no proportion to the particular charge or labour—if, therefore, a clergyman be serving the cause of Christianity, it can make little difference out of what particular portion of this fund (*i.e.*, by the tithes and glebes of what particular parish) his service be requited ; any more than it can prejudice the king's service, that an officer, who has signalized his merit in France, should be rewarded with a fort or castle in Ireland, which he never saw, but for the custody of which proper provision is made and care taken ; which indulgence, upon this principle, is due to none more than to those who are occupied in cultivating or communicating religious knowledge, or the sciences subsidiary to religion. It appears, therefore, that the objection usually alleged against private patronage, pluralities, and non-residence, are perfectly groundless, and cannot be said to level any just censure upon the Church of England.

Are the bishops of the Church of England justly chargeable with admitting immoral and worldly-minded persons to the ministry ?

It is exceedingly improbable, because the Church of England has taken very great care to exclude all such characters from ordination. She not only requires from every candidate a solemn profession, in the sight of God, that he thinks himself “truly called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ ;” but she also requires that the bishops be well assured, either by their own knowledge, or by the testimonials of three beneficed clergymen, that the candidate, to their personal knowledge, for a period of three preceding years at least, “has lived piously, soberly, and honestly.” Moreover, the candidates are to undergo the trial and examination of the archdeacon, who is to assure the bishop that he thinks them apt and meet both for learning and godly conversation ; and to prevent any “immoral and worldly-minded” intruders, the bishop, before he gives them their commission, makes a public application to the congre-

gation of their parish, to enquire whether they know any impediment why the persons presented should not be ordained ; and if "immorality and worldly-mindedness" are objected against any one, the bishop is to defer his ordination until he be convinced of his innocence. As an additional security in this matter, it is also enacted, that if a bishop shall be convicted of any culpable neglect in admitting candidates, he shall be suspended by the archbishop of his province from conferring orders for two years.* Indeed, if it were really the case, that persons are ordained by the bishops who do not live up to the truths which they will be afterwards required to preach, and whose previous conduct has not been agreeable to their holy profession, the Dissenters themselves are, in a great measure, blameable ; for (as has been already observed) before the bishop can ordain any person to the ministry, he makes examination into his character, by requesting the testimony of the inhabitants of the parish in which he has resided for the three preceding years (amongst whom there are necessarily many Dissenters), that if they know any just cause why he should be rejected, they would declare it. Now, when the case is thus publicly brought before them, if any vicious person get into the ministry through their neglecting to declare his immoral life to the bishop, they are accessory to bringing that person into the sacred office, and therefore cannot reasonably complain of an evil which they might so easily and so laudably have prevented. Indeed, even after such an immoral person has been ordained, if he does not reform his conduct, it is their duty to complain of him to the bishop of his diocese, and endeavour to procure his removal, rather than to separate from the Church, because an evil exists which they have never attempted to get removed. But even were we to allow this charge of "immorality and worldly-mindedness" in those who have been already admitted into the ministry of the Church of England, in its fullest extent, it would form no justification to those who dissent from her communion ; because her ministers do not derive their authority from their characters, but from their office : therefore, "although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their ministry, both in hearing the word of God, and in receiving of the sacraments ; neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the sacraments ministered unto them ; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men."† The validity, therefore, of the sacred

* Can. xxxv.

† Article xxvi.

functions is not at all affected by the sanctity or defects of him that administers them. To suppose it so, would be to transfer the glory from God to his weak instrument, as if any, the least part, of the divine virtue, which God has annexed to his sacraments, did proceed from his minister. Indeed, it is very certain that we may be edified and profited by an attendance upon the ministry of the very worst of clergymen, both in faith and practice; because there is no reason why truth, which is an intellectual thing, should lose its nature by any moral viciousness in the proposer. I admit that there is something extraordinary in the case of Noah, who awoke from his wine, and immediately prophesied; and yet the event verified his predictions. The Assyrian general was cured of his leprosy by following the prescription of the prophet, conveyed to him by that Gehazi, who, by his improper conduct in that affair, transplanted (if I may so speak) that foul disease into himself and posterity. The wise men did not the less find Christ at Bethlehem, although the priests and Pharisees sent them, without accompanying them thither. Our Saviour commanded his disciples to conform to the doctrines of the Scribes and Pharisees, because they "sat in Moses' chair," at the same time that he forbids them to imitate their example. Indeed, he himself chose Judas Iscariot, a thief, miser, and traitor, for one of his ministers, and told his disciples that he knew whom he had chosen; but to show that "neither he that planteth is anything, neither he that watereth, but that God giveth the increase,"* and to prove that "our faith doth not stand either in the wisdom (or the virtues) of men, but in the power of God," to this same Judas, notwithstanding his wicked disposition, our Lord said, when he sent him to preach the Gospel, "Whoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city."† We must, therefore, conclude that it is not the preacher, but his sermon, which is to be considered in this instance: for as in a burning-glass, although the sun-beams do but illustrate, not heat, in their passage, they may nevertheless kindle subjects that are more disposed to receive their action; so those very truths and notions of a learned preacher, which do but enlighten him, may inflame his hearers, and kindle in their hearts a love of piety and religion: and as, if a perfume be set on fire by the beams projected through a burning-glass (which they do not so much as warm in their passage), the scent is no less odoriferous and grateful, than if it had been produced by an actually burning coal; so that devotion, which is kindled by the preaching of even an "immoral and worldly-minded" minister, is not the less acceptable to God, for his not being himself affected with the piety which he begets in others. In a word, the circumstance mentioned in the second book of Kings re-

* 1 Cor. iii. 7.

† Matt. x. 4, 14, 15.

specting the bones of Elisha,* contains a far greater miracle in the historical, than in the allegorical sense, in which it is no such wonder to see a man raised to life by a dead prophet. We must not, therefore, regard the character, but the office of a minister; for his authority is not derived to him from his virtues, but from his commission given him by Jesus Christ: whilst, therefore, he bears a divine commission (whether it be a Paul or a Judas that ministers), he is to be respected and obeyed, not for his own sake, but for the sake of Him in whose name he is sent.† Before I conclude this subject, I would observe, that although I could heartily wish that every sermon (like St. John in the Apocalypse) preached in our churches could come from the mouth of an angel, and that every one who preached the Gospel (seeing the etymology of the word imports “glad tidings”) could claim the character given by David of Ahimaaz, that he was a good man, and brought good tidings; and although I most willingly admit, with a recently deceased prelate of the Church of England, that “a wicked and profligate clergyman is a monster in nature, and that even a gay and trifling one is a character totally inconsistent with the sanctity and dignity of the ministerial offices;”‡ yet I must be permitted to protest against that generalizing spirit of illiberality which condemns the whole body for the faults of a few. The world is the theatre where vice plays its part, where piety finds its delight and employment in private; and the irregularities of one man are blazoned abroad, while the virtues of many are unknown, or hidden within a narrow sphere. However, therefore, a truly religious mind must lament every deviation from the sanctity of the sacred office of a minister of God, it is not too much to assert that there is not a body or denomination of men more respectable in character, more unexceptionable in their conduct, or more useful and exemplary in their lives, than the clergy of the Church of England.

* 2 Kings xiii. 21.

† “As long as they minister the word of God, or his sacraments, or anything that God hath ordained to the salvation of mankind, wherewith God hath promised to be present, to work with the ministration of the same to the end of the world, they are to be heard, to be obeyed, to be honoured, for God’s ordinance sake, which is effectual and fruitful, whatsoever the minister be, although he be a devil.”—*Bishop Latimer’s Letter to Sir Edward Bayton*.

‡ See Bishop Porteus’s Charge, 1798 and 1799.

